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Airline in secret check on blacks

British Airways photocopying passports of black passengers

PETER VICTOR

British Airways is covertly photocopying the passports of black passengers as they check in to travel on transatlantic routes to America.

The airline claims it is obliged to do this under United States federal aviation rules, but the US Federal Aviation Authority denies involvement.

Bernie Grant, Labour MP for Tottenham, is calling for legal action against the airline under the Race Relations Act.

BA's policy of photocopying black passengers' passports came to light after Tony Kelly, a British-born black probation officer, complained when his passport was taken away and photocopied without his permission as he checked in at Birmingham Airport for a family holiday in the US and the Caribbean.

Mr Kelly, 40, was travelling with his wife and daughter. He said: "We booked the tickets months before we went through American Express, but when we got to the check-in desk the stewardess told us there was a problem with our seat reservations and they would have to take our passports to sort it out."

"After we had been standing there for some time a different stewardess came out and said 'Sorry to keep you for so long but the photocopy has broken down. We'll let you have the passports back as soon as we've photocopied them.' I was furious."

He wrote a letter of complaint to BA's customer relations department, demanding to know why his passport had been obtained "by such sneaky, conniving and underhand means".

In response, Jane James, of the customer relations department, wrote: "It is a US Federal Aviation ruling that all ethnic passports must be checked and photocopied if deemed necessary".

But a spokesman for the FAA denied this: "We don't ask airlines to photocopy people's passports. We have increased security recently, but this is nothing we know anything about. I've spoken to our security people and they said 'It must be another FAA'."

Mr Kelly was so infuriated by the reply from Ms James that he lodged a complaint with the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) on Monday.

He also wrote to all the black MPs and Bernie Grant has taken up the case. A spokesman for the CRE said it would be pursuing the matter: "We have used Section 20 of the Race Relations Act in the past against pubs and clubs. If we can show victimisation under the legal definition of the Act and we have the evidence then we could use S20 in this case."

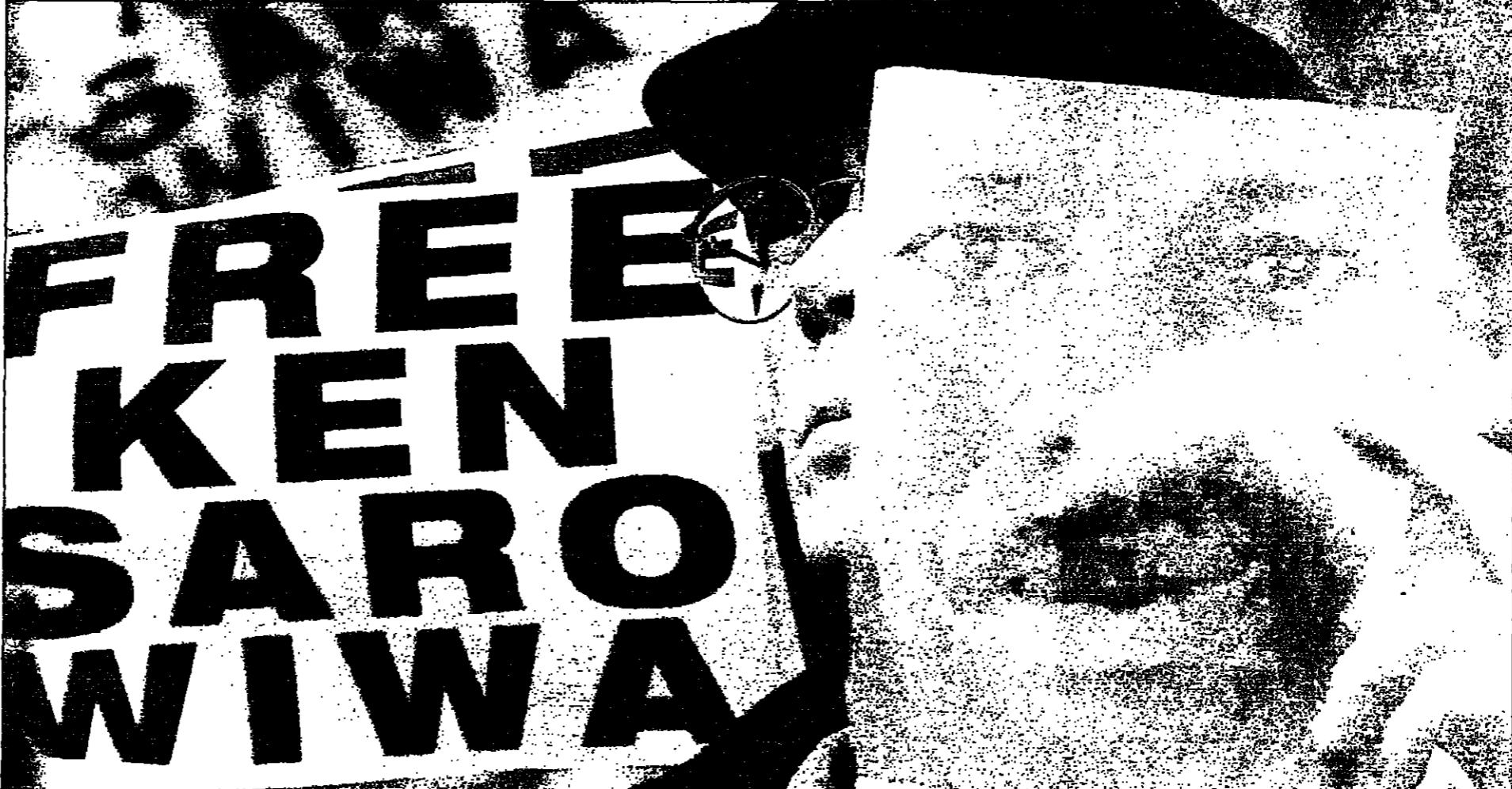
If BA is really bringing people of a particular background to hand over their passports for photocopying that is clearly discriminatory. We would ask, why aren't whites being targeted?"

BA said yesterday the practice had been adopted to safeguard against the imposition of severe penalties – \$3,000 (£2,000) – for carrying passengers without the correct documents. "Some passengers have been known to destroy their documents in flight. It is not restricted to black passengers at all," said the airline. It added that security firms employed by other airlines photocopy passports in a similar way.

Mr Grant said the whole business was outrageous. "This is what happens when the Government hands over its responsibilities to private companies. We do not intend to let the matter rest. We are going to pursue this through the courts."

American Airlines, BA's rival on transatlantic routes out of Birmingham Airport, said it never photocopies passengers' passports: "What would we do that for? It would cause chaos."

World condemns Nigeria over death sentences



Face off: A demonstrator outside the Nigerian Embassy in London protesting at the death sentence on author Ken Saro-Wiwa Report, page 14; Photograph: David Sandison

Rabin murder plotted by group, Israel says

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

The Israeli government yesterday said Yigal Amir did not act alone and was a member of a broader conspiracy to kill Yitzhak Rabin.

"We think that there was a connection between a group of persons who planned and arranged the assassination of the prime minister," said Moshe Shahal, the Minister of Police.

"We think they established a form of organisation to assassinate the prime minister and other political figures based on their ideology to try to prevent the peace process," Mr Shahal said, just before he spoke, police arrested two more suspects, bringing to five the number now held. They also uncovered a large cache of arms at Amir's house.

In court in Tel Aviv, a judge ordered Dror Adani and Oded Skornik to be remanded in custody. The police suspect Mr Adani, who first met Amir at a seminary where they combined military and theological studies, of complicity in Rabin's murder. Mr Skornik, who went to Bar-

ian university, near Tel Aviv, is suspected of knowing of the assassination plot.

Mr Shahal said Amir could not have carried out the killing by himself: "Without the infrastructure supplied to him by other persons, it would have been impossible to assassinate the prime minister."

In the search of Amir's home, police found explosives, fuses, delayed action devices and grenades big enough "to make any terrorist group proud."

The assassination itself was carried out with a 9mm beretta using dum-dum bullets made by Ha-gai Amir, the killer's brother.

Both Amir brothers are now under arrest. They were joined on Wednesday by Avivash Raviv, 28, head of the fanatical anti-Arab group Eyal, who says he did not take Amir's talk of assassinating Rabin seriously.

"You ask did he [Amir] say something ... OK, so he did. But I didn't know about his intentions or I would have reported it," he said. Police say they consider Mr Raviv a catalyst in the murder.

In court yesterday, Mr Adani prayed and Mr Skornik covered his hands with his jacket. Mr Shahal says more arrests are expected. Eyal, which is believed to have had fewer than 20 active members, started in the early Nineties at Tel Aviv University as a splinter group from Kach, a racist anti-Arab group founded by Rabbi Meir Kahane who was killed in the New York.

In August, police arrested a member of Eyal for beating a Palestinian woman outside Orient House, the PLO's Jerusalem headquarters.

Despite the police action, the government has limited the crackdown on the extreme right. The brief of the inquiry into the assassination is limited to the event and will not extend to the role of extreme right-wing and religious groups. The government is nervous of taking on the religious establishment, as Shimon Peres, the acting Prime Minister, wants to bring at least one religious party into his government. However, a member of the Shin Bet security police told the daily *Haaretz*: "We are looking into the possibility that rabbis gave moral and religious legitimacy to such an action."

Rabin Inquiry, page 12

Inquiry called into leak of arms-to-Iraq papers

RHYS WILLIAMS
Media Correspondent

The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor, yesterday asked Sir Nicholas Lyell, the Attorney General, to investigate how confidential government documents disclosed to the defence in the Orditech arms-to-Iraq trial were leaked to the *Independent*.

On Tuesday, the Court of Appeal overturned the convictions of four businessmen involved in exporting military components to Iraq on grounds that they had been denied a fair trial because vital documents, detailing contacts with the security services, were withheld by the Government.

At the end of the appeal, Lord Taylor warned that the documents had been made available "for the purpose of the appeal only" and were to be returned immediately on completion of the hearing. He said that any further reproduction of the material, either on television or in newspapers, would be referred to Sir Nicholas.

The Lord Chief Justice said sections of three documents

had been reprinted in Wednesday's edition of the *Independent*, one on the front page and two on page two. "It would appear at first blush that there has been a clear breach of the court's order. It is clear also that the documents only got there by going through someone who had access to them during the hearing." Counsel for the four men – Paul Grecian, Stuart Blackledge, Bryan Mason and Colin Phillips – assured Lord Taylor that the documents and copies of them had been kept secure and were now in the process of being returned to the Crown.

Nevertheless, the Lord Chief Justice ordered legal teams representing the four men to return all disclosed documents by Monday. "I'm sorry to say that this exercise has to be conducted, but it's perfectly obvious that it is necessary. Somewhere along the line there has been a leakage of some kind and we propose to refer the matter to the Attorney General to investigate."

Ian Hargreaves, editor of the *Independent*, was in court. He said afterwards: "So far as I'm concerned, the *Independent* was reporting a matter of great public interest to the fullest extent possible consistent with our understanding of the Lord Chief Justice's position."

Harrods charges £1 to spend a penny

JOJO MOVES
and BEN SUMMERS

pounds, those caught short in the legendary London store will soon have to pay £1 to use the toilets.

"We've received a lot of complaints from our regular customers that they're standing in a queue of 20 people who have come in just to use the toilets," said a spokesman for Harrods yesterday.

The charge will come into effect early next year, when contractors finish a £1m facelift of all 13 lavatories.

Now, because of the number of people who spend pennies in Harrods without spending their

feet at its first-floor luxury lavatories in June 1994 but all the rest remained free of charge. The spokesman said that some customers had complained about charging but he said more had welcomed it. "In the main people don't mind spending a pound to spend a penny."

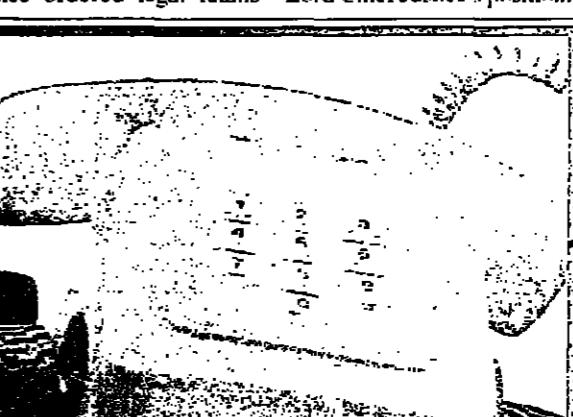
Harvey Nichols, Selfridges and Fortnum and Mason said yesterday they had no intention of charging for lavatories.

For 20p the City of Westminster offers musical, self-cleaning units. But Harrods said its new facilities more than justify the entrance fee.

"We are adamant that there's nothing quite like them as far as the level of service is concerned," the spokesman said.

"The refurbished toilets will have marble floors, mahogany fittings and brass fittings [sic].

There are hairdryers for those who get caught in a shower. Some even have payphones."



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IN BRIEF

Labour's £1bn jobs package

Staying in bed and living on benefit will no longer be an option for young people under a Labour government, Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, said as he announced a £1bn package – funded by the windfall profits tax on the privatised utilities – of proposals to get young people off welfare and into work.

Page 2

Bosnia deal to be signed
The US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, will travel to Dayton, Ohio, today to see a deal signed between Bosnia and Croatia that could be the first concrete achievement of the summit talks. Page 13

Ireland drugs gateway
Ireland's largest-ever seizure of cannabis, a 15-tonne consignment with an estimated value of £150m (£153m), has again highlighted the use of remote parts of the country's coastline as a back door for bringing drugs to Britain and European markets. Page 5

Protesters' target
Police will escort and protect two French naval vessels visiting Britain which could be the target for protesters against France's nuclear test programme. Page 2

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section TWO

JOHN LYTTLE 7 LIFE 4,5 LISTINGS 19-27 POP MUSIC 11-15 REVIEWS 9 TELEVISION & RADIO 28-39 WEATHER 37

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French naval visit may be marred by protest

IAN MacKINNON

Police fear that two visits by French naval vessels to Britain, due to begin today could be the target of protesters angry over the Paris government's nuclear testing programme in the South Pacific.

A major operation involving police from three forces will escort and protect the vessels from the moment they arrive in the Thames estuary, and while they are docked at their desti-

nation in London's docklands. Metropolitan police will be on the added threat posed by the arrival in London of the *Pacific Pintail*, the ship used to transport nuclear waste from Britain to Japan.

Officers involved in the operation to protect the vessels fear that the protesters may deploy similar tactics to those used in the past in an attempt to block the ships' progress along the Thames, using nets across the river, inflatables and

divers. The primary concern is that, because of the water temperature, and the darkness in which most of the shipping movements will take place, protesters could be injured or even killed in their efforts to make their point against the French testing in the Muroroa atoll.

In an effort to relay their fears, senior Scotland Yard officers are understood to have attempted in vain to contact the main anti-nuclear groups to discuss their plans, while

recognising their right to protest.

Vessels from Kent and Essex police force will accompany the first visitors along the Thames when they arrive in the early hours of this morning. Police will then provide a cordon from the time the ships, a frigate, two patrol and five training craft, tie up at West India dock until they leave on Monday. A second delegation, consisting of a French diesel submarine, five training ships

and two other vessels from the Dutch and Belgian navy, is due to arrive the following Monday and leave on Thursday.

Police will be responsible for policing the visit on water, with the help on land of security staff employed by the Docklands Development Corporation.

But the French navy will be responsible for the security of their own vessels, which have sovereign status, and it will be for them to deal with any protesters. Greenpeace last

night refused to reveal whether it is planning any protest against the ships.

Spokeswoman Kate Johnston said: "Our feeling is that for Britain to welcome any French military vessel at this time is a slap in the face for the British public, which has shown it is against French nuclear testing. We think it is a pretty disgusting insult that John Major is giving to the British public."

"The Commonwealth is against French nuclear testing and here is Britain, the head of the Commonwealth, welcoming French military vessels."

Shadow defence secretary Dr David Clark said: "It is an inopportune moment for the British Government to have invited French warships to visit London, at the very time when so many British people are appalled and opposed to French nuclear testing."

He added: "I think this is very insensitive indeed."

IN BRIEF

£1.3m for boy, 8, with mind of baby

An eight-year-old boy left with the mind of a baby after being starved of oxygen at birth was awarded £1.3m agreed damages yesterday in the High Court.

Daniel Breerton, born at the North Staffordshire Maternity hospital, Stoke-on-Trent, in 1987, suffered oxygen starvation for two hours before staff acted. Cared for by his parents, he suffers from cerebral palsy and spastic quadriplegia, is almost blind and has the mind of a six to nine-month-old.

North Staffordshire Health Authority admitted liability.

Lottery win inquiry

Camelot, the National Lottery organiser, called in police to investigate the case of a 15-year-old boy who won £10,000 on a scratchcard. Clayton Beech, of Scholar Green, Cheshire, bought his £1 ticket from a newsagent and claimed his winnings with his mother, who said she had asked him to buy it. By law players anyone buying a card must be 16 or over.

Steroids alert

Bodybuilders can develop kidney cancer by taking anabolic steroids, researchers said. In a letter to the *Lancet*, doctors from two hospitals reported the cases of two 26-year-old bodybuilders who took steroids and contracted the disease, unusual in those under 30.

Car advert misled

Nissan was found guilty of giving misleading information in a newspaper advertisement in a case that could have ramifications for the motor industry. The company was fined £2,000 by Scarborough magistrates for providing misleading information in an advert that listed a Serena model at £13,415 in 26mm high type with print only 1mm high further down the page detailing a further £425 to pay for delivery.

Nelson note sold

A dismissive letter from Admiral Lord Nelson in response to a request for information about the qualities of a former servant, fetched £8,250 at auction.

HIV increase

Forty new HIV cases have been reported in Scotland, figures show. It brings the total number of known HIV carriers north of the border to 2,338, of whom 1,767 are male and 571 female.

Crop of trouble

A farmer who grew crops over public footpaths and bridleways was fined £1,950. Malcolm Metcalfe admitting allowing wheat and rape to cut off ancient paths around Gilling West, in North Yorkshire.

Michael Howard

On Wednesday we reported the Ordeitch appeal in which the convictions of four men for supplying arms to Iraq were overturned on grounds that vital documents had been withheld by the Government. We referred to Public Immunity Certificates signed by ministers Kenneth Baker and Peter Lilley at the trial and by Michael Howard and Douglas Hurd at the appeal.

At Mr Howard's request, we are happy to make clear that the PII certificates that he and Mr Hurd signed invited the Court of Appeal to order full disclosure of relevant documents, excluding only sensitive names and references not affecting the case. With minor adjustments these certificates were approved by the Court of Appeal.

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The paper says: "There will be those – including highly re-
pected comrades – who insist we should stay inside the party and 'fight', but such an attitude fails or refuses to recognise that the party's constitution now effectively prevents this."

Youth unemployment: Under-25s would lose 40 per cent of payments unless they take training placements

The young face benefit cut under Labour

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

Staying in bed and living on the benefit will no longer be an option for young people under a Labour government, Gordon Brown, the shadow Chancellor, said yesterday.

Young people under 25 will lose 40 per cent of their benefit – as they may under the Tories – if they refuse to take up any of the schemes announced yesterday by Mr Brown in a £1bn package of proposals to get young people off welfare into work. It will be funded by the windfall profits tax on the privatised utilities.

Mr Brown denied Labour was creating a "conscript army" or lurching to the right. But the party leadership clearly believes its attack on the young unemployed will prove popular with Tory voters. Young people refusing to take a job could have income support reduced from £36 to £22 per week.

Labour's four options are:
■ Employers taking on a long-term unemployed young person will be offered a £60-a-week tax rebate for six months for in-work training for at least one day a week;
■ Young people taking a vol-

untary sector job will be paid a weekly wage, equivalent to their benefit plus a fixed sum top-up, for six months;

■ Full-time study on an approved course, entitling them to keep their benefit, and relaxing the 16-hour rule which stops the unemployed from retraining;

■ A place on an environmental task force which will work alongside Labour's proposed citizens' service, on a weekly wage, equivalent to benefit plus a top up, for six months.

Those who fail to find full-time work at the end of the six months will rejoin the system for another six months.

It is similar to schemes being tried in some regions, including Norfolk, but Mr Brown said the chief difference was the guarantee of proper training.

The fifth option, simply remaining unemployed and permanently on benefit, will no longer be an option," Mr Brown warned. "With our proposals, young people will be in work and not as with the Tories on benefit. If we do not act a generation of young people will have been abandoned with social division, crime, alienation and all the consequent problems for the next 40 years," he said.

"One of the options would

not be for them to lie in bed," said David Blunkett, the Shadow Education and Employment Secretary. "We have no choice because we have a ticking time bomb in terms of social cohesion that will cost us dearly if we don't act."

Young people will be given a

month to decide whether to take up the job offers, and Labour would not delay in bringing in the proposals, Mr Brown said. Firms would not be allowed to shed older workers to make way for a subsidised workforce of young people, he added. They would only qualify for the tax

breaks, if they offered new jobs. The Economic Secretary to the Treasury, Angela Knight, said Labour was promising people a fresh start but would deliver a dead end.

"Gordon Brown's 'make work' schemes won't create real jobs. It is businesses which

create jobs, not governments. All that Labour policies on a minimum wage and the social chapter would do is add costs to businesses and destroy jobs, particularly for young people, by making it much more costly for companies to employ them."

Paul Convery, of the inde-

pendent Unemployment Unit, said: "The evidence shows that coercing young people into training doesn't work. The vast majority of young people want to train, provided they know that training is going to lead to qualifications or to work."

Leading article, page 16

Photograph: Tony Buckingham

Think tank: Labour's Gordon Brown and Dawn Primarolo at the launch of the proposals in London yesterday

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news

Deprivation: Gap between rich and poor is widest in the capital, poverty researcher says

Inner London 'most deprived area of country'

GLENDA COOPER

All but one of the inner London local authority areas fall into the 20 most deprived in England, and inequality within the capital means unemployment in the poorest wards is eight times that in the richest.

Not even the "leafy suburbs" of outer London are exempt, with pockets of poverty living "cheek by jowl" with the "extremely wealthy", according to figures produced by Carey Oppenheim, senior lecturer at South Bank University.

Such contrasts have been growing inexorably over the past 20 years and are reflected throughout the country. Ms Oppenheim told the inaugural meeting of the London region of the National Local Government Forum.

But while all regions have struggled to deal with poverty, "the inequality is sharper in London", she said.

In 1979, 9 per cent of people lived in poverty (defined as 50 per cent of average income after housing costs). By 1992-93 this had jumped to 25 per cent.

For children, the figures are

worse. Ten per cent of children lived in poverty in 1979. This had reached 33 per cent - 4.3 million - by 1992-93.

The worst affected groups are, unsurprisingly, single parents, of whom nearly 60 per cent live in poverty. More than one-third of single pensioners live in poverty and 26 per cent of pensioner couples are poor.

Newham is the most deprived local authority in England, followed by Hackney.

Westminster comes fourth. The one inner-city authority that escapes the deprivation table is the City of London.

The local authority areas outside London in the 20 most deprived are the Scilly Isles, Liverpool, Knowsley, Birmingham and Kingston-upon-Hull. The two outer London authorities which figure in the table are Waltham Forest and Brent.

Within local authority areas standards of living can differ widely, but wards in the East End borough of Tower Hamlets dominate the 10 worst wards in terms of multiple deprivation - six of the list are from that area. The 10 with the highest standards of living are dominated by



Leading light: Singer-actress Natasha Bain, one of two professionals leading 130 people from across Manchester in an original opera Remembering Eden, presented yesterday with the BBC Philharmonic as the orchestra's 60th anniversary community project. Photograph: Craig Easton

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Assault law 'should protect children'

SHAWN CONNOLLY

Adult assault laws should be extended to cover children in order to make smacking socially unacceptable, according to the authors of a two year study into children and violence.

Allan Levy QC, one of the panel responsible for the report, claims that present laws help promote children's suffering rather than deter it.

At the launch of the findings of the commission on children and violence yesterday he called for changes in the law to transform social attitudes on hitting children.

"But I doubt if anyone would get prosecuted for smacking a child because it would probably be treated like a trivial assault between adults, as now."

The commission wants to give any form of violence against children the same social stigma as drink driving or racism. Sir William Utting, its chairman, said: "Occasionally smacking a child might not do much damage to that child,

but it will reinforce the attitudes of other adults who may go much further."

"We are not just talking about smacking but all forms of violence against children. People may say that being smacked as a child didn't harm them, but how do they know? I was smacked as a child - maybe I'd be a nicer person now if I hadn't been."

The commission also called for non-violent behaviour to be actively promoted in schools and other organisations and for a national campaign against bullying to be carried out.

Boxing should also be abolished and a stricter television watershed enforced, according to the report's findings.

The study, commissioned by the Gulbenkian Foundation, concluded that children are more often victims of violence than perpetrators of it.

Cycle of despair at heart of crisis of bad parenting

Analysis

Today's report on *Children and Violence* makes dismal reading. The spiralling cycle of violence and abuse of children leads them to grow up to become violent and abusive parents. Ninety-one per cent of young people committing seriously violent offences suffered severe abuse or trauma in childhood.

As a shopping list of solutions, some of the commissions recommendations seem a touch ineffective and naive. Banning boxing may not be a good idea but it is hardly central to the issue of catastrophic parenting. A plea to broadcasters "to realise the huge potential of the media for promoting pro-social behaviour and non-violent conflict resolution", seems a little unlikely to bear fruit.

Similarly, some of their admonitions to parents on smacking seem a little far from real life. If you stand in the supermarket queue and watch some parents whacking their chil-

dren, dragging them about, shaking them and yelling, the idea that "non-violence should be clearly and consistently preferred and promoted" doesn't seem much help.

However, someone needs to keep promoting best practice, in the face of offical attitudes that are deeply ambivalent about violence to children.

An outcry followed a local authority's attempt to strike off the register a childminder who smacked her charges. The media for promoting pro-social behaviour and non-violent conflict resolution", seems a little unlikely to bear fruit.

But the real problem is with disastrous parenting by those who were scarcely parented

themselves. How do you break into that cycle of despair? Like most social problems, there may not be total solutions, but there are ways of making significant improvements - at a price. If there is the genuine political will, much can be done.

Take the Greater Shankill Partnership: it has just received £4.7m from the EU and other sources to target every single child in the area over the next years and prove what can be done to improve the children's social and educational prospects. About 400 babies a year are anticipated. A group of 50 local mothers are being trained to NVQ standard and then employed to befriend each new young mother even before the baby is born. There will be a nursery place for each child. It may not be a cheap option, but nursery school is cheaper than prison.

Polly Toynbee

British Gas pulls out of Charter Mark award

British Gas is pulling out of the Charter Mark, the Government-sponsored consumer service standard, it announced yesterday. However, its chief executive Cedric Brown, who has been heavily criticised for his 75 per cent pay rise this year, denied the company was jumping before being pushed.

The move comes amid growing speculation that it would be stripped of the award by the Government after it emerged last month that complaints about its standards of service had hit record levels.

Mr Brown told BBC *Breakfast News* the decision followed the passing of the Gas Act in Parliament on Wednesday, which will force British Gas to separate its transportation operation from its gas supply business in an attempt to increase competition.

He said: "We think it is appropriate therefore to review the Charter Mark and we have decided that it no longer meets the requirements of the business."

In September Mr Brown issued a public apology to his 18 million customers after a record number of complaints about poor service. Complaints to the Gas Consumers Council reached 24,999 in the first half of 1995, compared with 24,355 during the whole of 1994, prompting speculation that British Gas would be stripped of the Charter Mark.

Labour's consumer affairs spokesman, Nigel Griffiths, yesterday called for an inquiry into "falling levels of service" at British Gas. "It is hard to believe that safety standards are not falling when consumers are complaining in record numbers about the service."

Roger Freeman, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and the minister in charge of the scheme, suggested Mr Brown had realised the Charter Mark may not be renewed. "I regret his decision but we did tell British Gas in April that if it served the customer well, we'd review whether the Charter Mark for British Gas would be renewed."

Union driver 'told he had no case'

A senior union official yesterday told an industrial tribunal that a member who had alleged racial harassment could not justify his claims.

Robert Badlan, the regional industrial officer for the General Municipal Boilermakers Union's London region, said he told Tahir Janjua that he felt he did not have a case.

Mr Badlan told the hearing in Croydon, south London, that when he first met the former chauffeur to the union's general secretary, John Edmonds, "it took me quite a while to find

out it was racial harassment".

Pakistani-born Mr Janjua, 38, is claiming unfair dismissal on the grounds of racial discrimination.

Mr Badlan said he had told Mr Janjua that the allegations he was making were very serious and, if pursued, someone could be facing the sack. Mr Badlan said he took independent legal advice, and "the opinion was that Mr Janjua did not have a case".

Mr Janjua, of Norbury, south London, had made an allegation of racial harassment against Edna Davis, the personal as-

sistant to the general secretary, only months after starting his job in February 1993. He was dismissed in March last year.

Mr Badlan, questioned by Getty German, representing Mr Janjua, denied that he had told Mr Janjua what to say.

"He told me he was mistaken about the racial harassment," Mr Badlan said. "At the end of the meeting he apologised... There was no prompting from me."

Mr Edmonds told the tribunal Mr Janjua caused problems in the office by insisting on

having his overtime sheets signed each day, "although it was not necessary".

Mr Edmonds said it was his job to investigate racial allegations and he did this by talking to all the parties concerned.

"When it came down to it, all we had were two allegations... All we had were two incidents relating to one week only and that did not seem to me to be justification..." There is no question that Mr Janjua's race figures in any way in the [disciplinary] procedures," he said.

The hearing continues.

Jay is 100%

3

5

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news

England's heritage: Plans unveiled to transform tourism at ancient monument as modern urban sculpture wins design award

Fountain showered with praise

A woman and child play against the backdrop of Birmingham's "floozy in the jacuzzi", who yesterday picked up her sixth award, writes Nicholas Schoon.

The dramatic renovation of Victoria Square won the premiere President's Award and the design award among the Landscape Institute's annual accolades. It features a group of statues by Dhruva Mistry, the largest of which - the river goddess nicknamed "the floozy" - is towards the rear of the picture. The square lies between the Council House and the Town Hall, both Grade I listed Victorian buildings. The renovation won praise for being modern, yet relating to the surrounding High Victorian architecture. Designed by the city council's landscape practice group with help from the Arts Council, it cost £4.0m.

Photograph: Dan Chung



New road is key to revamped Stonehenge

NICHOLAS SCHOON
Environment Correspondent

A new light electric railway at Stonehenge will ferry visitors from a huge new visitor centre to an observation point half a mile from the stones.

People who want to see Stonehenge close-up will have to walk the rest of the distance, although there will be special vehicles to ferry infirm and disabled people from the terminus.

Once there they will be able to walk to the centre of the 5,000-year-old stone rings - something that has not been allowed for the past 10 years.

The stones will be set among more than six square miles of rolling chalk grassland with neither roads nor fences. The public will be able to roam this archaeological landscape, a United Nations-designated World Heritage Site boasting more than 400 scheduled ancient monuments.

This was the vision unveiled yesterday by the National Trust and English Heritage, the Government conservation agency, yesterday. Next week they will apply for £25m of National Lottery money to the Millennium Commission to help realise it. But, more importantly, they need to persuade the Department of Transport to close the existing busy A roads which run next to Stonehenge and to build a bypass.

Next week a new set of negotiations starts between the two conservation bodies and the Highways Agency in an attempt to end their long-running quarrel over the future of the roads around Stonehenge.

The transport department wants to widen the A303 trunk road linking the M3 and the West Country along the stretch next to Stonehenge because it has become a bottle-neck.

This provides a one-off opportunity to grass over and close the road and bypass the World Heritage Site. But English Heritage and the National Trust say they are

bitterly disappointed by the latest proposals from the Highways Agency for a bypass north of Stonehenge.

"We've had a wasted year of discussions with them," Jocelyn Stevens, the English Heritage chairman, said. "Their proposals represent an absolutely appalling threat which would see the butchery of a World Heritage Site."

"This is a great battle we're having. They've got away with terrible road building because for much of the time they've only had local opposition who haven't got the expertise and resources we have."

Yesterday the two conservation organisations published their own detailed proposals for bypasses both to the north of Stonehenge and more expensive than any of the agency's plans.

One has a 2.5-mile tunnel and would cost about £250m. The other has only half a mile of tunnel and would cost £54m. The Highways Agency says tunneling would make the road unaffordable.

English Heritage looks after Stonehenge while the National Trust owns 1,500 acres immediately around it. The chairman, Lord Chorley, said that if the Government attempted to build any route which damaged this land it would use its special legal right to take the matter to Parliament.

Only once the roads problem is solved will the organisations be able to transform today's experience of visiting Stonehenge, which Mr Stevens called "infinitely disappointing".

The present 1960s visitor centre next to the stones will be demolished and a new "Gateway Wessex" centre built two miles away, with extensive car parking, restaurants and possibly a large new hotel.

The light railway will lead from here to an observation point and a Stonehenge interpretation centre, mostly built underground. Visitor numbers are expected to rise from 700,000 to 1.4 million.

Class-size survey is blow to parents

JUDITH JUDD

Class size makes no difference to education standards except for the youngest children, says a survey by school inspectors to be published today.

The finding will infuriate parents who have been campaigning for more public spending on schools to stop class sizes rising. Polls show that most parents believe that smaller classes mean better education.

However, inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education who compared class sizes and standards in thousands of lessons found no correlation between the two except in the case of five- to seven-year-olds.

Their report says the quality of teaching is paramount. A marginal decrease in class size of three or four pupils would not improve achievement, the inspectors say. And they produce figures to show that the cost of big reductions would be prohibitive.

Their figures suggest that

the Labour Party's costing of its pledge to reduce class sizes to under 30 for five- to seven-year-olds is far too low. The party has promised to pay for its pledge with £60m saved by scrapping the assisted places scheme.

The inspectors' findings on younger children are supported by the most authoritative research on class size so far, the student teacher achievement project in Tennessee. It revealed that five-year-olds in classes of 15 did much better in maths and reading than in classes of 24.

The inspectors urge schools to use more classroom assistants to help in larger classes. There are more than one million primary school children in classes of more than 30 strong.

Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education, said last week: "There is no research that formally links marginal differences in class size with the quality of delivery. But clearly huge classes are more difficult to manage."

DAILY POEM

From Roads

By Edward Thomas

Now all roads lead to France
And heavy is the tread
Of the living; but the dead
Returning lightly dance;

Whatever the road bring
To me or take from me,
They keep me company
With their patterning.

Crowding the solitude
Of the loops over the downs,
Hushing the roar of towns
And their brief multitude.

Pat Barker's 1995 Booker winner *The Ghost Road* takes as its starting point the anti-penultimate verse (the first verse here) of Edward Thomas's long poem *Roads*. Thomas was one of 900,000 British soldiers who lost their lives in four years of relentless trench warfare in the flatlands of Flanders and northern France between August 1914 and November 1918. France lost 1,350,000 men, Germany and Russia close to 2 million each. The combined total of military and civilian deaths in the Great War has been estimated at 15 million. Edward Thomas was killed at Arras in France in 1917 at the age of 39. His *Collected Poems*, edited by R George Thomas, are published by OUP.

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news

Job insecurity: Study of 10,000 civil servants finds the threat of unemployment causes physical and psychological problems

Privatisation seriously affects your health

LIZ HUNT
HEALTH EDITOR

Rising levels of job insecurity among white-collar workers will mean poorer health in the general population, according to the most comprehensive study to date of the before and after effects of threatened redundancy.

Researchers say that living with the threat of unemployment or forced job change has a deleterious effect on health even when the fears eventually prove groundless.

They say their findings are relevant to the privatisation of public services and other rationalisation programmes being carried out in the private sector.

The on-going study, known as the Whitehall II study, involving more than 10,000 civil ser-

vants, found that workers who thought they were at risk suffered more symptoms and reported more health problems than colleagues who believed themselves secure.

The changes in physical health were greater for men than women, while women suffered more psychological symptoms than men. Previous studies have shown that women react to the anticipation of job loss more emotionally, with a range of psychological symptoms, than men who exhibit physical problems although these may be related to psychological stresses.

The health problems could not be linked with changes in health-related behaviour such as smoking, drinking, or exercise, according to Jane Ferrie, a civil service department, was first mooted in

ment of Epidemiology and Public Health at the University College London Medical School. Ms Ferrie says that "job insecurity has little effect on behaviour patterns that may damage health".

According to the report in the *British Medical Journal*, many studies have shown that unemployment is bad for health but the new findings are important because of the high quality of the before and after data.

Previous studies have focused on "before" data, when the prospects of job losses had been announced but before the day of redundancy. The Whitehall II study drew on baseline data collected in 1986 before the privatisation of the Property Services Agency, a civil service department, was first mooted in



Home alone: Group worker Janis Owen, 44, has found it hard to adjust to losing her job. Photograph: Geraint Lewis

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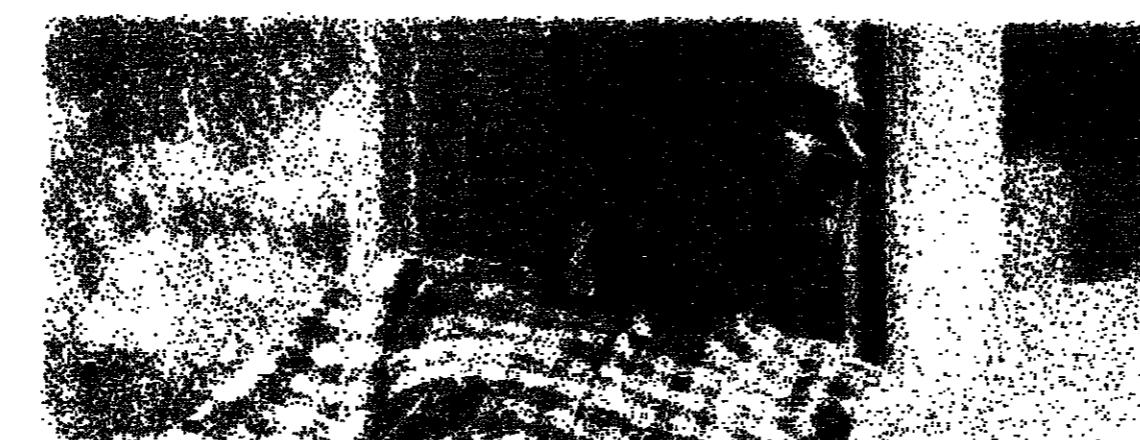
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Routine price to pay for a life of leisure

CLARE GARNER

CASE STUDIES

When Janis Owen, 44, was made redundant six weeks ago,

her first priority was to cancel

the newspaper delivery. Not

because she wanted to shut

herself off from the outside

world, but quite the opposite.

"I wanted to have to go

round the corner to the newsagents so I would have to

speak to someone each day, otherwise I might not," explained Ms Owen, from Brentwood, Essex. "I make sure I take the dog out by lunch time ... I make sure I get up in the morning and get dressed to keep some sort of routine but it's actually quite hard to do that."

Ms Owen was a £31,000-a-year group worker at Brentwood's St Charles Centre, a government-run secure unit for youngsters. The first hint of the centre's closure came in May and by August it was history. "I had worked there 14 years. To be told with such short notice that you weren't wanted any more made me angry."

Vowing to be positive, she signed up for a one-year university course in management. But recently the reality of her situation has begun to hit home.

"It's quite difficult being self-disciplined. There is a part of me which enjoys doing very little after working very hard, but then the novelty wears off. Just this week it has struck me... the first signs of depression."

Ms Owen has noticed subtle

changes in her habits and attitude.

"I never used to watch

much telly but now I find myself

looking at the listings to see if

there is a film to watch in the

afternoon. I find there is a

slight tendency to smoke more

now, although my drinking

hasn't altered," she said.

The future is uncertain. I'm

a realist and know exactly what

the situation is like when it

comes to finding employment in

your forties, particularly in a

new career."

The course is part-time and

all the other students are in paid

employment. "I no longer have

colleagues. I miss just saying

'good morning' and the office-

type chats. When we couldn't fix

a course meeting for an evening

next week I almost felt bereft

because that was another thing I could go to."

Although Ms Owen received

a pay-off of three years' salary,

being unemployed means she

must watch her money more

carefully. "Now that I have finite resources I can't be spontaneous with money in the

knowledge that I have next

month's salary coming in."

To Richard Lock, 54, a

£36,000-a-year team leader for

Customs and Excise, the op-

portunity to take voluntary re-

dundancy was good news.

"When I became aware of the

option my mind was made up

within 10 minutes. The civil ser-

vice was being run down to a

second-rate service and cash

wasn't a problem for me."

Mr Lock, a keen sailor from

Carshalton, Surrey, eased into

early retirement. "I knew when

I took the decision that it would

be a positive experience."

Since receiving a pension of

half his annual salary plus a

lump sum, Mr Lock has lost a

stone in weight, cut down con-

siderably on the amount he

drinks and still cannot find

enough hours in the day.

UK works longest hours in Europe for average pay

PAUL WALLACE

Economics Editor

The British work the longest

hours in Europe, the percent-

age of the population in the

labour force is second only to

Denmark, but our living stan-

ards are no more than the Eu-

ropean Union average.

These findings emerged from

UK Business in Europe, the first

comprehensive comparison of

the UK with other EU countri-

es.

In 1993, the average number

of hours usually worked per

week by full-time employees was

43.4, 3.9 higher than in Ger-

many and well above the EU

average of 40.2. What is

more, it has risen in the

past 10 years, while it has been

falling across the EU.

In practice, the differential

for hours actually worked was

rather less, with UK employees

working an hour and a half

longer than the EU average of

39.6. The large discrepancy be-

tween actual and usual hours

worked, said the report, was be-

cause a much higher proportion

of the labour force is absent

from work in the UK because

of leave, sickness, injury, train-

ing or other reasons.

According to John Philpott,

director of the Employment

Policy Institute, the discrepan-

cy is a sign of the downside of

the flexible labour market.

"Some people will try to work longer because they're worried about losing their job. The result is that they fall ill."

Flexible or not, Britain's

labour force is proportionally

the second largest in the EU,

the report shows. In 1993, the

labour force was 62 per cent of

the population over the age of 15, well

above the EU average of 55 per

cent and only exceeded by Den-

mark with 67 per cent.

The principal reason for this

is that a higher proportion of

women work in the UK than in

any other major European

country. Higher participation by

young workers (aged 15-24) and

older workers (50-64) also

accounted for the relatively

<p

international

Republicans queue up to do battle									
Qualifications (in ages)									
Robert Dole	War-hero, long-term member of Congress, now Senate Majority leader, aged 72. Formerly known as a bad-tempered pragmatist, Senator Dole is making his third run for the White House, repackaged as a sweet-tempered right-winger.	Phil Gramm. Democratic turn-coat, economics professor, Texas Senator, aged 53. A convinced fiscal conservative, Senator Gramm has learned to recite the dogma of the religious right. But his unprepossessing looks and thick southern drawl have undermined his well-heeled campaign.	Lamar Alexander. Former Tennessee Governor and Bush Education Secretary, aged 55. Running as an outsider, who would return power to the states. To attract attention, Mr Alexander has been walking across New Hampshire but his costly campaign remains equally pedestrian.	Pat Buchanan. Former Nixon and Agnew speechwriter, ultra-conservative columnist, aged 56. Anti-gay, anti-abortion, anti-government, anti-free-trade, Buchanan makes the others look centrist. Loud-mouth darling of the Religious Right, but short of credibility and funds.	Richard Lugar. Indiana Senator, foreign affairs expert, aged 63. Respected but too nice, too lugubrious and too moderate to succeed in this race. Why is he bothering?	Arlen Specter. Lawyer, Pennsylvania Senator, former staffer on Warren Commission (which investigated JFK assassination), aged 65. A moderate, unimpressive pro-abortion Republican of the old school, Specter is detected by the Religious Right.	Robert Dornan. Fundamentalist Californian Congressman, Vietnam Veteran, aged 62. Dornan has a visceral, tribal hatred of all Democrats, starting with Mr and Mrs Clinton. Running to give himself more opportunities to pursue this hobby.	Steve Forbes. Publishing tycoon, son of the late Malcolm Forbes, supply-side economic guru, aged 48. Forbes, the most interesting man in the race, is spending millions of his own money (he can afford it) to push for a return to Reaganomics. Surprisingly successful so far.	
2000 voting (Republicans)	39 per cent	19 per cent	8 per cent	19 per cent	9 per cent	9 per cent	8 per cent	13 per cent	
Sound bite:	"I haven't thought what I'll do... if I get elected at my age, you know, I'm not going anywhere. It's not an agenda, I'm just going to serve my country."	"I have the most reliable friend you can have in American politics and that is ready money."	"Let's go far with Lamar."	"Our western heritage is going to be handed down to future generations and not dumped into some landfill called multiculturalism."	"I believe I bring more to the table than the other candidates."	"I have a strong programme for cutting back on violent crime."	"I'm a former fighter pilot. I'm ready for what may be the toughest mission of my life. I do not know how far I will go, but I will try."	"Start by scrapping the tax code. Don't fiddle with it. Junk it. Bury it. Replace it with a pro-growth, pro-family tax cut that lowers tax rates to 17 per cent."	
Characterisation:	Good, but could blow up.	Poor.	Poor	Inconceivable	None	None	None	Poor	

Powell leaves field clear for the dour and the dull

JOHN CARLIN
Washington

A gust of wind blew through Washington on Wednesday afternoon, at just around the time when General Colin Powell was announcing to a largely disappointed American electorate that he would not be running for the presidency next year.

Meteorologists said it was to do with high pressure over the Atlantic. Students of Washington politics might have interpreted the phenomenon as a collective exhalation of breath from President Bill Clinton, and the 10 candidates who have declared their intentions to run for the Republican presidential nomination.

President Clinton's sigh of "quiet relief" (as White House sources put it) reflected the widespread perception that General Powell would have defeated him soundly in a head-to-head electoral contest. But the man who has most cause for celebration is Bob Dole, whom the polls show to be far ahead

of the rest of the Republican presidential field.

Mr Clinton has at least won the big prize once. Mr Dole, the Senate majority leader, knows 1996 will be his last chance to fulfil an ambition that has been gestating since he first entered Congress in 1960. He is 71 and this will be his third attempt to become president. He failed early in the primaries against George Bush in 1980 and 1988.

Mr Dole - whose Dickensian name aptly captures a dour, colourless disposition - would not have relished a fight against the immensely popular General Powell. Doubly gratifying for Mr Dole was the general's decision to unlock not one mystery but two: no, he wasn't running for elected office but yes, he did have his party political allegiances. He had just become a member of the Republican party, he announced at his Wednesday press conference.

This was a pleasing bonus for Mr Dole for, should he win the Republican nomination, he can expect to bask in the warm glow of General Powell's public support. He may even be in a position to dangle before the electorate the tantalising proposition that, in the event of becoming president, he would appoint General Powell to his cabinet, possibly as Secretary of State - a position the general has said in the past that he covets.

Against Mr Clinton, Mr Dole will need all the help he can get. As the Washington mantra goes, Mr Clinton is a better campaigner than he is a president. Young enough to be the Kansas senator's son, he will be outdone in energy. Mr Clinton is also a far more stirring orator than Mr Dole, who sometimes sounds so stilted as to convey the impression that he has difficulty reading.

The interest over the next four months, when the first Republican primaries come up, will centre on Mr Dole's party rivals. Will Pat Buchanan, the CNN talk-show host, so inflame the Republican faithful with his fervid right-wing rhetoric ("build a 2,000-mile Iron Curtain across the Mexi-

can border") that they will be persuaded to vote with their spleens and not with their heads, thereby handing Mr Clinton re-election on a plate?

Will they go for the marginally less zealous Phil Gramm, the Texan senator who looks like a turtle and brays like a mule? Mr Gramm pondered out loud earlier this year whether "someone as ugly as I am or as conservative as he could be elected". (The answer, the cherubic Mr Clinton would be happy to inform him, is no.)

Some speculation will also centre on Lamar Alexander, a former governor of Tennessee. He is neither abrasive nor militant. He is just plain nice. And a little dull. Mr Clinton's problem campaigning against Mr Alexander would be to keep his sarcasm in check, for fear that he would be seen by the electorate as a bully, gratuitously mean to the most inoffensive, most hard-working, slowest boy in the class.

The sense of deflation with which the American public responded to the news that Gen-

eral Powell was not running coincided with audible groans of despair from the media contingent condemned to cover next year's campaign. They feel like football reporters might who, hopeful of covering the Premiership, are assigned by their editors to the EFL League.

Which was why, within minutes of learning of General Powell's decision, Washington journalists sought to lift their spirits by suggesting on the television talk-shows that Newt Gingrich might contemplate a late entry into the Republican race. The attention-loving Speaker of the House teasingly responded that he would finally decide in early December.

Mr Gingrich would be unwise to say yes. He lags far behind Mr Clinton in popularity - an ABC television poll on Wednesday showed that, one-on-one, he had 26 per cent approval ratings, to Mr Clinton's 68 per cent. Mr Gingrich, whose bombast disguises a calculating political mind, is likely to disappoint those thirsting for fun and fire in American presidential politics.

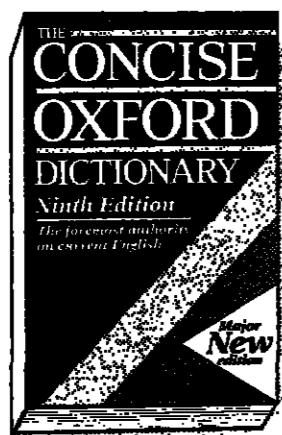


Quiet relief: The Clinton camp feared being beaten by Colin Powell

Photograph: AP

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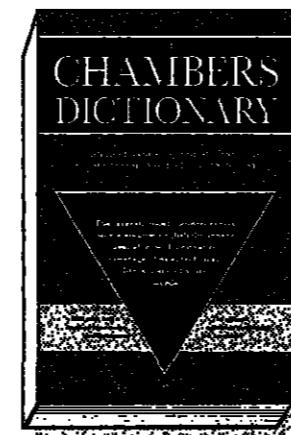
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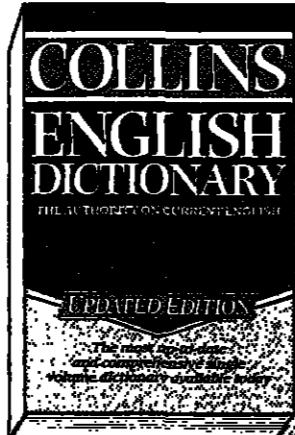
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Rabin assassination inquiry leads to US

DAVID USBORNE

New York

The investigation into the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin may quickly extend across the Atlantic to New York, home to a small, ultra-zealous group of right-wing Jewish extremists.

Attention will focus on members of Kach, the militant nationalist group founded by the late Rabbi Meir Kahane, who was shot in Manhattan in 1990.

Closely related to Kach, which was banned in Israel last year, is another group named Kahane Chai, or "Kahane Lives".

Israel's security services have already identified Eyal, the extremist group based inside the country, to which the self-confessed assassin, Yigal Amir, belonged, as an offshoot of Kach and Kahane Chai.

For several months before Rabin's assassination, the Israeli Prime Minister had been the target of inflamed rhetoric in New York against his peace policy and especially the agreement to return control of the West Bank to the Palestinians.

Most notable was the virtual Jewish fatwa against Rabin uttered last June by a radical rabbi

in Brooklyn, Abraham Hecht. He told followers: "According to Jewish law ... any one person who wilfully, consciously, intentionally hands over human bodies or human property or the human wealth of the Jewish people to an alien people is guilty of the sin for which the penalty is death".

Not even since Rabin's death, which has left most New York Jews united in mourning, have his detractors shown remorse.

Last Sunday, the day after the assassination, Zionists gathered in Brooklyn to mark the fifth anniversary of Kahane's death and openly praised Ami, passing out buttons featuring him in Nazi uniform.

At the meeting, Mike Guzofsky, the leader of the New York Kach cell, told one journalist: "Rabin was bad for Jews. He is over and he's gone. Rabin was assassinated by the Arabs and the Arabs are sad. That should give you some kind of idea what kind of Jew Rabin was." At the gathering, small girls handed out leaflets showing Rabin in Nazi uniform.

It has long been supposed that supporters of Kach and Kahane Chai in New York have been active in funnelling fund-

ing to extremist counterparts in Israel. Last February, President Bill Clinton moved to freeze the assets of Kach in attempt to end the cash flow.

By some estimates, the ultra-nationalist factions opposed to peace in Israel have received about 70 per cent of their funding from supporters in the United States.

The US has also exported some of the extremists themselves to Israel. The activities of groups like Kach in New York last came under the microscope in February 1994, when Baruch Goldstein, a Brooklyn-born doctor and Kach supporter, entered a mosque in Hebron and massacred 29 Muslims at prayer.

After the tragedy, Rabin called Goldstein a "foreign implant, an errant seed". The former Israeli President, Chaim Herzog, went further, declaring: "The US is a breeding ground for extremists".

Kenneth Jacobson, director of the Anti-Defamation League in New York, warned against exaggerating the role of extremists in the city. "The suggestion that this assassination was some kind of import from the United States, I think, is too sim-

plistic," he said. "Clearly there are divisions on the peace process among Jews in America just as there are in Israel itself".

David Harris, of the American Jewish Committee, offered the same warning. "It is true that a disproportionate number of the American Jews in Israel are involved in opposition to the peace process. But it is a flat-out stereotype to suggest that all are extremists".

■ Jerusalem — Vandals splashed white paint over Kahane's grave yesterday, the second attack since Rabin was killed on Saturday, AP reports.

The Supreme Court yesterday rejected a petition from Kahane's son Benjamin to hold a public memorial rally for his father. "They are not going to destroy us," Benjamin Kahane told reporters. "They tried to destroy my father and the people were still with my father and they are still with us today."

He blamed the "evil government" for creating the violent atmosphere that led to Rabin's assassination. "The left is inciting against us; they want to annihilate us", he said. "I have nothing to be sorry for. You [the left] should be sorry."



Accused: Dror Hadani, one of the Israeli murder-plot suspects being led into court in Tel Aviv yesterday

Defiant Arafat pledges to hold the peace line

MICHAEL SHERIDAN

Gaza

Yasser Arafat mused yesterday on the violent death of Yitzhak Rabin and on the dangers facing the surviving peacemakers in the Middle East. "We want to continue the peace process after this awful crime," said Mr Arafat. "Was he shocked? Well," he said. "I have mentioned many times that there are many enemies for this peace process on the two sides. This is not the first time I have faced threats and danger."

As he said this little of the old defiant Arafat flickered in his tired face and his hunched eyes seemed to twinkle with the memories of 1982. "Sharon has mentioned that he had tried 13 times to assassinate me in Beirut," he said, referring to the hardline Israeli defence minister who besieged him in the Lebanese capital, "but I am a very strong believer that no one can escape from his destiny."

"May God save you!" cried an elderly man in the audience at one of Mr Arafat's chaotic, but now heavily protected, press conferences.

Destiny, thus far, has prodded Mr Arafat to the small self-ruled enclave of Gaza, where he is busily performing the rituals of a head of state in a former club-house on the Mediterranean beachfront.

Yesterday he was playing host to the Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, who had come to Gaza to pledge Britain's support for "the courage and vision like those of chairman Arafat". But even as the sun shone on surf outside the windows, the shadow of Mr Rabin's killing fell across the room, for Mr Arafat faces charges of treachery from his own radical critics.

Recently there has appeared to be a relaxation of tension between the chairman and the Hamas Islamic fundamentalist movement. Leaders of Hamas in Gaza flew to Khartoum this month to meet their "external leadership" where they agreed to have exploratory discussions with the PLO.

Kashmir gang says hostages unharmed

Srinagar (Reuter) — Guerrillas holding two Britons and two other Westerners hostage in Kashmir re-established contact with Indian authorities yesterday, and officials said the captives had not been harmed.

The officials lost contact with the guerrillas after 19 September, bringing the crisis that began in early July to a stalemate and leaving the captives facing a freezing Himalayan winter.

"All of them are safe, but one British hostage and the US hostage are sick," KB Jandial, a spokesman for the government of the state of Jammu and Kashmir told reporters. "They are being treated well. He said the kidnappers spoke three

The Middle East after Rabin

"The fundamentalists are beginning to absorb under the Palestinian Authority," explained Taher Shirehi, a Palestinian journalist widely respected for his political analysis. "People see the beginnings of economic development and they want to part of the success."

But Mr Arafat has been hampered in his task of nation-building by the slow pace of Israeli withdrawals and by the formidable economic problems in the tenements and camps where most of Gaza's 800,000 people live. Per capita income in Gaza is only \$850, compared with \$1,700 in the West Bank. During the years of Israeli occupation and the Palestinian uprising, the economy collapsed, creating poverty and unemployment that drove many young people to the fundamentalists.

The immediate cause of tension is the presence in Gaza of about 4,000 Israeli settlers who occupy almost one-third of the territory. Recent suicide bombings by Islamic militants were aimed at settler targets but such incidents are a throwback to the time when Gaza lived in a permanent state of curfew, shootings and disorder. Now, there are the glimmerings of hope as a trickle of international aid begins to make a difference and some funds flow back from Palestinians in exile.

Mr Rifkind announced yesterday that Britain would fund two more projects for education and police equipment that will come out of the £83m allocated in British aid over three years. Britain has been doing what it can to help Mr Arafat acquire the authority of government and Mr Rifkind's visit followed one by the Prime Minister earlier this year. British police are helping to train the new security forces and other British-funded projects include help for the rehabilitation of political prisoners and assistance to the new Palestinian broadcasting network.

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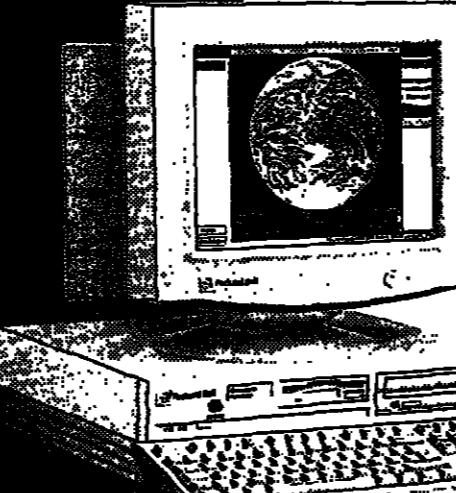
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Mostar deal offers crumb of hope for Bosnia peace talks

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington
TONY BARBER
East Europe Editor

The US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, will travel to Dayton, Ohio, today to see a deal signed between Bosnia and Croatia that could be the first concrete achievement of the nine-day old summit talks.

President Franjo Tudjman of Croatia and Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia were reported last night to have initialled an agreement to reunite the divided city of Mostar, provide for the return of some refugees and generally shore up the wobbly federation between the two countries.

The accord is a welcome sign of progress in the talks, held amid a virtual media blackout at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base at Dayton. There were hopes of movement last night as US mediators presented Serb, Croat and Bosnian delegations with documents intended to form the basis of a final settlement.

The UN War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague chose yesterday to announce that it was charging three Serb officers with involvement in the massacre of 261 men near Vukovar in Croa-

tia in 1991. The most senior is General Mile Mrksic, commander of Krajina Serb separatist forces in Croatia until the Croat victories of last August.

The war crimes row is only one of several disputes over post-war territorial, constitutional and political arrangements. The latest proposals are assumed to cover the division of Bosnian land between the Serbs and the Muslim-Croat federation, the status of Sarajevo and the powers and make-up of future central institutions.

If the talks succeed, President Bill Clinton hopes to send a 60,000-strong Nato force to Bosnia to patrol a settlement, although the Republican majority in the House of Representatives voted on Wednesday to prohibit Mr Clinton from sending troops without the approval of Congress.

Diplomats hope the return to Dayton of Mr Tudjman could presage progress on the future of Eastern Slavonia, the last slice of Croat territory in rebel Serb hands. Talks on the region, where the Vukovar massacre occurred, broke down last weekend. Both sides agree Eastern Slavonia should be put under temporary international supervision, but the Croats want the transition to last a year, while the Serbs have asked for three.

Knifeman holds hostess hostage as jet lands in Athens



The hijacker, an Ethiopian, threatening the flight attendant with a knife taken from a food tray, after the Olympic Airways jumbo landed yesterday. He was soon overpowered; no one was hurt. Officials said the man, initially identified as Shamsu Kabret, 34, struck 30 minutes before the plane, which had flown from Australia, landed. He

asked to see UN and media representatives. Police said he claimed his papers were forged and his real name was Melaku Melekebel, from Jam Bahdor, Ethiopia. 'He grabbed me and said he wanted to talk to the captain,' said Sofia Matelou. But ... everything ended well. No one panicked.' The jet parked off the runway while the

incident was played out. An anti-terrorist squad posing as reporters overpowered the hijacker, who claimed he was a journalist who fled Ethiopia after being jailed for criticising the government. He then used forged papers to get to Australia, where he was arrested and convicted of entering the country without documents.

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Old enemies narrow the gulf

PEOPLE
What really happened in the Gulf of Tonkin in August 1964, propelling the United States deeper into the Vietnam War? Quite possibly, very little.

Robert McNamara, US Secretary of Defense in the Kennedy and Johnson years, met his old nemesis General Vo Nguyen Giap, in Hanoi yesterday, and asked him about it. General Giap told him there was no second attack on US vessels in the gulf, the report of which — by the US Navy — helped accelerate 'McNamara's war'.

'On the fourth of August, there was absolutely nothing,' General Giap told him. The general's word was good enough for him, said Mr McNamara, who recently expressed regrets over the war.

US fears that all of South-East Asia could fall to communism was an illusion, General Giap said, adding: 'However, some people, even the brightest ones, believe in such illusions.'

Mr McNamara, who was visiting Vietnam in the hope of organising a conference of decision-makers in the war, greeted passers-by on a jog around Hoan Kiem Lake. None appeared to recognise the man whose decision-making once laid waste to their country.

The German nation is disgusted. Michael Schumacher, the Formula One world champion, has been branded 'the world's most loathsome man' by *GQ* magazine.

His crime appears to be that he is a crashing bore who 'makes Nigel Mansell seem interesting'. Yesterday outraged German readers aired

cause of its spectacular view, is little used by the family. Part is open to the public. Philippe de Gaulle has said that it hardly feels like 'their' house now.

While there were many favourable comments on the Chiracs' visit, many condemned it as a political calculation.

Nor were the tributes to de Gaulle unanimous. The left-leaning newspapers were almost silent. Non-Gaulist politicians on the right also kept their distance. Former president Valéry Giscard d'Estrées of the UDF unveiled a new portrait of the general, but stressed that 'not everyone in France' shared an affection for the former leader.

Last night, in the final and most spectacular of the anniversary events, the words of Charles de Gaulle, clear and urgent, rang out over the esplanade of Les Invalides in Paris, read by leading French actors, against the backdrop of torch-bearing guardsmen formed up into an enormous cross of Lorraine.

But it was the night at La Boissière that caught the headlines. The house that Charles de Gaulle bought in 1934 because it was geographically convenient for his army career and be-

cause of its spectacular view, is little used by the family. Part is open to the public. Philippe de Gaulle has said that it hardly feels like 'their' house now.

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international

Commonwealth summit: Pressure for expulsion fades as Britain and South Africa favour dialogue with junta rather than sanctions



Anti-nuclear protest: Demonstrators in Auckland wearing masks of Mr Major denounce his support of French tests. Photograph: David Hallett/AP

Leaders soft-pedal over Nigeria move to execute writer

STEVE CRAWSHAW
Auckland
and RAYMOND WHITAKER

Nigeria was engulfed by protests yesterday after the military regime's confirmation of death sentences on the playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists, but there was little sign of a concerted response from Commonwealth heads of government who begin their summit in New Zealand today.

Nigerian human rights groups urged the world to speak out as General Sami Abacha's government denied rumours in Lagos yesterday that the nine had already been executed.

"The haste with which the sentences were passed shows they are determined to shed blood," said the president of Nigeria's Civil Liberties Organisation, Ayo Obe. Mr Saro-Wiwa and his colleagues, who campaigned for environmental and minority rights in the southeastern region of Ogoniland, were convicted of the murders of four Ogoni leaders in what has been described as a politically motivated trial.

The US, France and the Organisation of African Unity all called for the sentences to be commuted, and the Foreign Office summoned Nigeria's deputy high commissioner in London to deliver the same message. "This represents a major step backwards following a partially flawed judicial process," the Foreign Office said. Shell oil company, whose operations in Ogoniland were the target of local protests, also appealed for Mr Saro-Wiwa to be spared, but a spokesman for the military council, Brigadier-General Samu Malu, ruled out clemency.

The focus of demands for action to be taken against Nigeria was the Commonwealth summit in Auckland. The Commonwealth Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, himself a Nigerian, expressed "profound dismay", saying: "To proceed with this sentence will be seen as an act of defiance in the face of world opinion." The host, New Zealand's Prime Minister, Jim Bolger, said it

would be "quite appalling" if Nigeria flouted the Commonwealth's commitment to human rights by carrying out the sentences.

But several leaders, including Mr Bolger, South Africa's President, Nelson Mandela, and the Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad, spoke out against suspending Nigeria or imposing sanctions. Campaigners were particularly disappointed by Mr Mandela, who arrived in Auckland yesterday. While Zimbabwe's President, Robert Mugabe, said the verdict "is shocking to everybody" and said excluding Nigeria from the Commonwealth would be discussed, Mr Mandela said he favoured dialogue as a means to put pressure on General Abacha's government.

British officials said it was necessary to "tread very carefully", because of the danger that tough talk might backfire.

General Abacha pulled out of coming to the conference at the last moment. The Nigerian delegation is led instead by the Foreign Minister, Chief Tom Ikon.

Mr Anyaoku said it was essential for procedures to be agreed, "to decide what to do in such situations"—this is very important for the credibility of the Commonwealth. Already in danger of being written off as a talking shop, the organisation risks further damage to its credibility if it fails to respond to the flagrant of human rights in Nigeria.

Plain-speaking Major melts Bolger's wrath

Auckland — John Major seemed to have escaped almost unscathed yesterday from his first diplomatic argument with Commonwealth colleagues over French nuclear tests, writes Steve Crawshaw.

The Prime Minister's support for President Jacques Chirac, asserting France's right to carry out tests in the Pacific if it wished, has infuriated other Commonwealth countries—not only those in the Pacific region—as heads of government gathered for the Commonwealth summit here. Mr Major's decision to side with Mr Chirac was seen as a slap in the face for the Commonwealth itself.

Jim Bolger, New Zealand's Prime Minister, had made clear his dismay. When push came to shove, however, Mr Major's policy of directness-with-a-smile seemed to pay off yesterday. In a speech at a lunch given for him by Mr Bolger, Mr Major complained of the "distorting prism of long-range sound bites". He talked of the "nice free ride" that he could have taken in condemning France, as Britain does not seek to carry out further tests. "So I could have taken that free ride. But I'm not prepared to do so because if I had, it would have been hypocritical ... and if I had, I would have fallen short of the honesty and frankness that New Zealand has a right to expect from the United Kingdom."

Mr Bolger stood adding sympathetically as Mr Major emphasised: "Even among the best of friends, there are sometimes points of difference". Mr Bolger himself talked of a "warm reciprocity of views". The Jim-and-John body language confirmed the official version, that the meeting had been far from tense.

Even in terms of public reaction on the streets of Auckland, Mr Major got off lightly. A rally was called under the heading "Major Outrage". But only a few thousand turned up, and the rally was partly hijacked by Maori activists. Demonstrators argued amongst themselves, while anti-nuclear slogans looked forlorn.

Tonight the heads of government go into "retreat" to hammer out the final communiqué. This will address Nigeria as well as the nuclear testing.

The Commonwealth Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, said he expected a "clear statement" on testing. If it is clear, Britain may be the lone dissenter. Britain hopes the statement will be couched in general terms but officials insist Britain will not back down: "We don't want a row if we can avoid it. But if they want a row, they'll get one."

IN BRIEF

Turkish court clears US reporter

Istanbul — A Turkish court acquitted a Reuters correspondent charged under the country's laws on freedom of expression. It ruled that her article on the army's battle with separatist Kurds did not constitute a crime. The three-member State Security Court voted unanimously to acquit Aliza Marcus, 33, a US citizen, on the recommendation of the court prosecutor.

Sudanese rebels 'advancing on Juba'

Ten-Ten — Sudanese rebels say they are closing in on the southern capital of Juba in their most successful offensive in four years and they plan to battle on to Khartoum. Sudan People's Liberation Army commander Chol Luai said in the town of Ten-Ten, on the border with Uganda, that rebel forces were 23 miles from Juba and advancing.

Mengistu attacker pleads guilty

Harare — A confessed plotter in the attempted assassination of fugitive Ethiopian dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam showed a court yesterday wounds he claimed resulted from Mengistu's order to kill him. Abraham Kifne, 36, from Ethiopia's Eritrea province, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit murder.

Egyptian militants fire on train

Cairo — Assassants opened fire on a passenger train in the south of the country— injuring two tourists—for the second time in two days, and a statement issued in the name of an Islamic militant group warned tourists to leave Egypt.

Asian elephants in danger of extinction

Geneva — The Asian elephant is under threat of extinction as economic expansion brings it into greater conflict with man. The World Wide Fund for Nature said. A WFN report says only 35,000 to 50,000 of the species remained in isolated pockets.

Hyundai chief grilled in Roh inquiry

Seoul — Prosecutors yesterday grilled South Korea's best-known tycoon, Chung Ju Yung, founder of the giant Hyundai group, as they worked through the nation's top boardrooms to discover the source of former president Roh Tae Woo's slush funds. The 79-year-old honorary chairman of the Hyundai empire, who is in fragile health, was supported by an aide as he walked into the Prosecutor-General's office.

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Labour gets it right on jobs

Nice one, Gordon. If Labour had its way the mind-numbing existence of the unemployed youth – sleeping in, watching Richard and Judy on daytime television, kicking round the streets with their mates – would last no more than six months. As Gordon Brown announced yesterday, Labour would offer them a choice of four different job and training options: full-time education on benefits, work in the voluntary sector or on an Environmental Taskforce, or subsidised jobs in the private sector. If they turned them all down, their benefits would be cut. Labour has several obstacles still to overcome, but this could be the most ambitious attempt yet to tackle the growing social and economic problem of youth unemployment in Britain.

Currently 600,000 young people under the age of 25 are registered unemployed. Many have never worked. They are largely unskilled young men living in the inner cities, and the longer they stay on the dole, the more difficult it is to find work. And it isn't hard to imagine the social consequences of hundreds of thousands of bored young people, written off by employers, pacing the streets.

But is concern for our social fabric sufficient reason to compel young people to enter government programmes? Mr Brown described his proposals as the best anti-crime policy Labour could have. Presumably this is Labour being "tough on the causes of crime" – and if the Unemployment Unit is to be believed it would be tough on young people, too. After all, for government to make rules about how

we spend our days sounds draconian. The rest of the community, however, is already supporting these young people by providing them with a giro every fortnight. And Mr Brown is not proposing to force them into anything: he would simply withdraw 40 per cent of their benefit if they refused to participate in programmes developed to help them to find work and support themselves. He is right to do this. There is no reason why the rest of the country should subsidise idleness, and it is entirely reasonable to expect unemployed people to accept certain obligations alongside new opportunities.

The deal cuts both ways. If government is to reduce benefits for the under-25s after six months, it has a responsibility to give them real chances and choices to do something better. So tacky schemes just to get people off the streets won't be enough – we need mechanisms and projects which really improve the chances of finding work. Training for the unemployed has been notoriously unsuccessful in the past, and great care would need to be taken to avoid repeating previous mistakes. Private sector jobs would need policing. Otherwise government might find itself subsidising employers who abused the policy by turning out each young person after six months and taking on someone new.

But despite all the potential problems, this is a very welcome proposal. We've heard much from new Labour about "rights and responsibilities" in the past year or so. Here is a policy that could turn rhetoric into reality.

Mackay licks the Moralist Tendency

A week ago, those whose job it is to help the victims of domestic violence were in despair. The Government had announced that it did not intend to proceed with the Domestic Violence and Family Homes Bill, following a campaign waged against it by a small group of Tory MPs and one newspaper – the *Daily Mail*. Over at *Mail* HQ there was an orgy of self-congratulation. The *Mail* was "the newspaper everyone is talking about. And no wonder", it boasted. Serve the Government right for introducing flawed, anti-family legislation. Shame about the battered women, of course, but there you go. Blame Lord Mackay.

Then, over the weekend, something began to happen. Tories such as Peter Bottomley, alarmed by the week's events, began to speak out against the nostalgic fundamentalism of the Bill's critics. Earlier this week, the Government's defeat over Nolan will have reminded ministers of the dangers of acceding to the prejudices of its back benches. By yesterday morning it had become clear that the Government had decided to proceed with the Domestic Violence Bill as part of its new divorce legislation. It looked like a major victory for Lord Mackay, the Lord Chancellor.

Ah yes, said a rather less confident-sounding Roger Gale (MP for Family Villages West), but we have been told that lots of the nastier bits of the Bill – the ones we objected to – will disappear. So it is still a victory for common sense, etc.

It may be the new year before the Bill is published and we can test Mr Gale's

assertions about how far the Moralist Tendency has been accommodated. And it is a worry that a Bill which spent several years being discussed and shaped by experts might have been significantly altered in just a few days. But there are some early signs that the concessions offered to the saintly ones will be minor and – in a few instances – entirely cosmetic.

Property rights for cohabitantes who are the victims of violence will remain in the Bill, but courts may not be allowed to renew exclusion orders indefinitely. There could be a slightly tighter definition of "mental harm" – but non-physical criteria will not disappear entirely. And Lord Mackay has promised (according to Mr Gale) to "redefine the very significant difference between marriage and cohabitation". In this promise one senses not much more than an instruction to the drafters merely to avoid language that will excite Mr Gale.

If these are indeed the changes that Lord Mackay has in mind then he will have scored a significant victory – and one in which MPs can share. Parliament will gain because it will have a chance (which the previous fast-track procedure for the Bill would have denied) properly to discuss an important piece of well-drafted legislation.

The Lord Chancellor's victory will be even more satisfying for his will be a triumph of long-term solutions over short-term politicking. He will know that by a mixture of smart manoeuvre and obfuscation he has achieved important things for people who needed his help.

ANOTHERVIEW Hugh Colver

Tories need a propagandist

My reasons for resigning as director of communications at Conservative Central Office are quite complex – an accumulation of things. When I was appointed, the arrangement at Central Office was very different from now – there were very different sorts of people. I had worked as a PR man in Seaford Yard and Whitehall and in industry, and I was being asked to apply those skills to a different theme – politics.

Of course, it is not as simple and straightforward as that. I have reached the age of 50 without any active involvement in politics, and there must be a message there. At times has gone on, and as the regime at Central Office has changed – and has, quite properly, become more geared towards campaigning and electioneering – I have been less a director of communications and more a political propagandist. If you are regarded as the principal spokesman for Tory politicians, you have to think like them, speak like them and act like them.

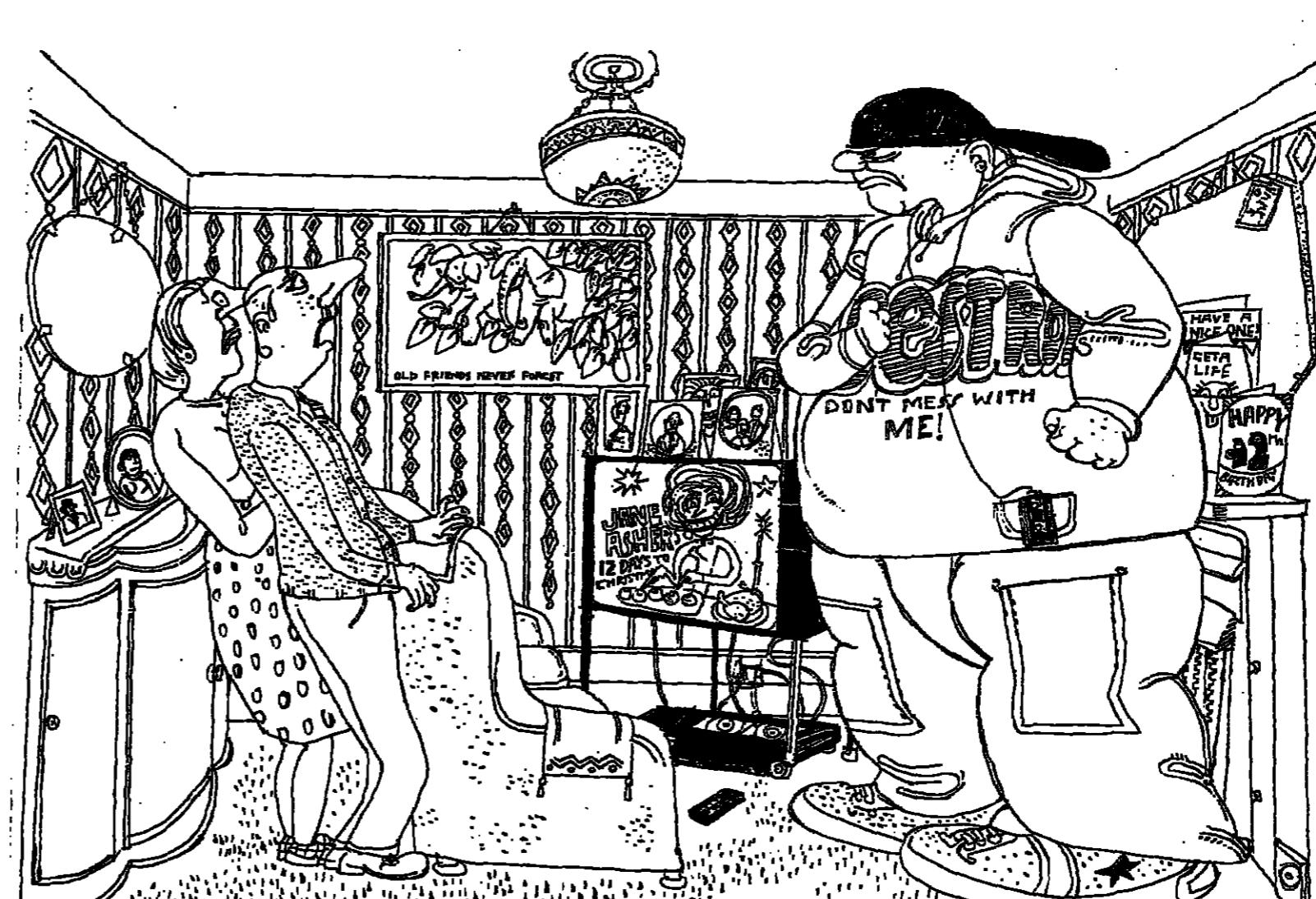
And it became increasingly apparent that that was not for me. The difficulty I have with hard-edged party political propaganda is that one is required to say that everything the Labour Party does and says, and all the Labour Party personalities, are by definition wrong and misguided. And on the other hand, everything that the Conservatives do and say must be correct and well thought out.

Now this, although it makes for a very straightforward party political knock-about style, does not often allow for a serious debate on the pros and cons of the issues. Although I accept that in any organisation you work for you are going to take their position and take their lines, you are usually able to weigh up the merits and demerits of an issue, and not just blindly criticise those who oppose, and blindly promote all that your organisation believes in.

This in no way implies that I have any quarrel with the policies of the Tory Party. I would just like to engage in a more measured political discussion. As matters stand, the drawing of boundaries between political groups dilutes serious debate on issues.

People have said my resignation compounds the problems of the Tory Party at a particularly difficult time. Frankly, I am not important enough for this to be a great blow to the Conservatives. In fact, from that point of view, it was much better to go now instead of getting into real difficulty later on and doing my job badly or – worse – having to resign nearer the election. The Tory Party needs a political propagandist, and I was not what they needed.

The writer was, until Wednesday, director of communications at Conservative Central Office.



'Careful, son! Or we'll report you to Gordon Brown!'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Salaries, MPs and the interests of the Commons man

From Mr David Hill

Sir: How on earth can you justify describing John Major's humiliating defeat over Nolan as "canny" ("Game, set and match to Nolan", 7 November)? Your suggestion that he was playing a game of double bluff so that the issue went away does not bear a moment's scrutiny. For the Prime Minister and the whole of his government to be defeated by 51 votes is a disaster in anyone's book.

As a result, he has been made to look weak and out of touch and drawn upon himself the wrath of many of his backbenchers, some of whom are threatening not to comply with the new rules.

And the benefit that can be derived from Parliament having taken the right decision now is certainly not the product of some "cunning plan" by our accident-prone Prime minister.

Of course, it is just possible that you were indulging in some deeply hidden irony. If so, it is so deeply hidden that I searched for it in vain. If not, then the idea that you should give John Major one jot of credit for the debacle of Monday night is stunningly perverse.

Yours sincerely,

DAVID HILL
Head of Press
Labour Party
London, SE17

From Mr Malcolm Taylor

Sir: The row in Parliament about sleaze and disclosure of earnings has opened a window to a wider truth: we, the electorate now

realise how little we know of how MPs expect to spread their parliamentary time.

Disclosure of extra parliamentary earnings will not be enough. An MP's duties have to span parochial constituency matters, national concerns, and all overlaid by the demands of the party machine. There is no one answer to how a balance is to be maintained. Parliament needs the lobby fodder time-servers as much as it needs the wheeler and dealers and those with social consciences.

The answer, ultimately, is not any heavy-handed Nolan committee, and its resulting watchdogs. The answer lies with the constituency party machines, which, influenced or instructed by the central organisation, have to choose the candidates. They alone have the power to ask candidates the questions that should produce a profile the electorate can vote on.

It seems, for example, fundamental that the candidate should disclose whether he or she is prepared to live on £33,000 per annum. If he cannot, then we need to know how he proposes to supplement his income; will he be a part-timer or will he be a paid parliamentary consultant?

It is surely not beyond the bounds of reality for constituency party organisations to establish a code, or a moral contract, which their chosen MP would be expected to respect?

Yours faithfully,
MALCOLM TAYLOR
Lancaster

Too much secrecy over arms exports

From Mr Oliver Sprague

Sir: Your editorial ("Publish quickly, Sir Richard", 8 November) correctly notes that UK arms exports to Iraq were a direct result of the secrecy that surrounds arms export decision-making in this country. There is a clear lesson to be learnt: we must establish a system of accountability that allows both parliamentary and public scrutiny over the export of UK weapons and related technology.

Critics, of course, will argue against this on grounds of practicality and commercial confidentiality. Yet a system operates in the US whereby, at the beginning of each year, a Congressional committee may object to proposed sales of more than £4.5m. Furthermore, throughout the year, Congress is informed of any deals of over £9m and is given 30 days to debate whether the export should go ahead.

Unfortunately, you are optimistic in your belief that the Scott inquiry will expose the

origins of the decision. It has focused on the concealment and corruption that flowed from British policy but not on its incompetence.

Did any minister resist the decision on policy grounds rather than fear of exposure? Did any minister or official wonder what use Saddam might make of additional armaments when they were no longer needed for defence against Iran? Who, if anyone, in our diplomatic defence or intelligence services warned against the risk of the Kuwait invasion? What attention was paid to their warnings? What has happened to their careers – and to those of the officials or ministers who ignored them?

If these questions remain unanswered the British people will never know the full scandal of arms-for-Iraq, and they can have no assurance that it will not be repeated.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD HELLER
London, SW9
8 November

Solution sought for wardens' woes

From Mr Paul Thurston

Sir: May I comment on your article "Probation hostel wardens offered 'zero-hours' deal" (6 November)? As an agency properly concerned with public protection, we ensure that our hostels always have at least two members of staff on duty at all times. Relief staff are used to cover the absence of permanent staff. Some of these absences are predictable (eg leave), and others are not (eg sickness).

This element of uncertainty means that relief staff have to be employed on a casual basis and we cannot guarantee a minimum number of hours. They are not

expected to be on standby just in case. They can have other jobs and they can refuse offers of work from us without detriment. Both men and women work in this capacity and most are quite clear about their employment status. There is no proposal to offer all relief staff a zero-hours contract.

The issue you raise is in connection with just two relief staff, both of whom feel disadvantaged financially by the requirement to alter the rota. We are in negotiation with them to try and resolve this matter satisfactorily.

Yours sincerely,
PAUL THURSTON
Assistant Chief Probation Officer
West Yorkshire Probation Service
Wakefield, SW1
6 November

Islington man will stay put

From Mr Tim Allan

Sir: For the record, Tony Blair is not looking for a house in Notting Hill and never has been ("Blair may desert his Islington heartland to go west", 9 November). This was known to the Evening Standard gossip writer who first reported this baseless rumour and would have been known by your reporter and leader writer had they bothered to check. Yours sincerely,

TIM ALLAN
Press Officer to Tony Blair
House of Commons
London, SW1
9 November

Hunger or homelessness

From Ms Tabitha Collingbourne

Sir: Under the present housing benefit rules, local authorities can restrict the amount of benefit paid towards rent if they decide that the accommodation is either too large for the claimant's needs or unreasonably expensive.

People who are sick, over 60 or have dependent children are given a degree of protection from these restrictions: they can only be made if there is alternative suitable accommodation available and it is considered reasonable for the claimant to move.

At present, local authorities spend £14m per annum nationally on topping up payments to low-income families and the sick and elderly in accordance with these regulations.

From January 1996 this protection for "vulnerable" people will be removed. In its place, local authorities will have discretion to increase payments in cases of "exceptional hardship". In 1996, the funding for "exceptional hardship" cases will be capped at £2m.

As a result, many families with children and many people who are sick or elderly and already living below the poverty line will be faced with the choice between paying for food and heating, and paying the rent: the choice between hunger and homelessness.

These are the people who are expected to dissuade fraudulent landlords from charging high rents, or to move "down-market", often to inadequate, insecure accommodation if they can find it.

Is this how our political leaders exercise their "moral" and "family" values?

Yours faithfully,
TABITHA COLLINGBOURNE
Welfare Rights Adviser
Torquay, Devon
6 November

Young minds and a long-ago war

From Mr Hugh Lydon Burke

Sir: Pat Barker, who has just won the Booker Prize, is wrong to think that today's young people don't care deeply about the people who gave their lives in the First World War ("In the footsteps of fallen heroes", 9 November). When I read the poems of Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen it makes me cry to think of all the suffering that happened in the trenches. They bring to life the sounds and smells and terrible noise that were there.

As long as these poems are read, all those men will never be forgotten.

Yours sincerely,
HUGH LYDON BURKE
(Aged 9)
Marsh Baldon, Oxfordshire
9 November

Late leaders

From Mr P. Sen Gupta

Sir: In your list of murdered world leaders since 1948 (International, 6 November), you missed out King Faisal of Iraq, murdered in 1958. Yours sincerely,
P. SEN GUPTA
Weston Super Mare
6 November

JPY 10/10/95

JULY 10 1995

comment

Never glad confident Sainsbury's again

Working woman in a hurry, who only comes for basics, can never get in and out in less than an hour

Some trends are not to be bucked. Sainsbury's, I read, is losing market share, which means that many besides myself have resolved never again to do their household shopping at Sainsbury's. Delia Smith is only part of what makes the Sainsbury's environment unbearable to any woman of spirit. The whole sanctimonious set-up makes an average sinner want to scream. Plus the grossness of Sainsbury's success, the car-parks crammed from dawn to night, seven days a week, so that the working woman in a hurry can never get in and out of Sainsbury's in less than an hour.

The brainwashing starts as you enter the car-park. Only the disabled and people with small children may park within sight of the entrance. There is no parking bay marked "working woman in a hurry". So she parks on the outer limits and trudges, at inevitable danger to life and limb from child- and disabled-filled vehicles, across the car-park to the only entrance, to find that the fancy trolleys to be used by the disabled and people with small children are the only ones parked anywhere near the door.

Working woman has to scramble down an alley to secure a trolley and struggle to steer it on its jammed wheels back to where the scores of parents with children and disabled folks who seem to have come to the supermarket for fun, fool about with theirs. Once she gets to the door she finds the entrance encumbered by a stall offering free tastes of some grim convenience food, which all the fun-loving leisure shoppers line up to try, discussing each munchie at length with a middle-aged woman who is impersonating an 18th-century dairy maid in mob cap and apron. The other side of the lobby is filled with an enormous raft of greetings cards of which the leisure shoppers seem determined to read every single one. Working woman in a hurry has no option but to wait patiently until the way before her should clear. She has been on Sainsbury's premises for 15 minutes and so far has nothing in her trolley.

If she is to negotiate the "fresh" produce section, working woman had just better hope that Delia has not found some hitherto undreamt-of use for grenadiers, custard apples or lemon grills. It stands to reason that a grenade flown in from Grenada will have cost its weight in aviation fuel – that is what you are paying your money for, supposing the checkout staff have the faintest idea what those critters are when they're in your basket. Supposing you are fool enough to put them in your basket.

"New" potatoes from Egypt are tastefully decorated with peat, by way of hinting that they have just been raised



GERMAINE GREER

Did you want the other things?" ... "Oh, no, I was just giving them a ride in my trolley"

from the virgin sod. Packaged herbs sell for a hundred times their value. The prepared vegetables sealed in plastic bags saying brightly "stir-fry", "green salad", "mixed salad" are already wilting by the time you get them home the vestige of taste that is all that remains after the ferocious slaying and washing will have disappeared.

This working woman, who has her own home-grown vegetables and eggs from her own hens, comes to Sainsbury's for basics. Pasta, for example. And finds that she is practically forced to buy Sainsbury's own brand, which is the kind of pasta that cooks from the

outside in, so by the time the middle is anything but brittle, the outside is slimy. Which is unimportant if you're going to bury the pasta in a slop of sauce, a slop of Sainsbury's ready-made PC sanctimonious Delia-Smithified sauce. Pasta should have flavour and character; it should be possible to enjoy it with olive oil and garlic alone. Most of my Sainsbury's pasta ends up in rubbery heap in the hen's trough.

Do Sainsbury's give me an option? No,

they don't. If I want good quality Italian pasta, and I don't mean "fresh pasta", which is synthetic muck, I have to go elsewhere.

If I have been putting up with these conditions for years, why has the worm now turned? The last, the very last, time I was in Sainsbury's I spied a plastic bottle of T-Cut car polish and popped it in my basket where it leaked onto my lemons, my crumpets, my pasta and my digestives, though not on to my elderly sour passionfruit or my cous-cous. Most of what was in my trolley I didn't really want, but after the ordeal of getting into Sainsbury's you have to buy something. I didn't buy the Tocai del Veneto that I really wanted, because there wasn't any and no one to ask whether there would ever be any again. I discovered the T-Cut disaster after I had got to the checkout. I asked for a cloth to wipe the stinking stuff off my hand and was given a J-cloth black

with grease by a woman who had a pile of clean ones at the till beside her. A bell was pressed and a bad-tempered blonde appeared, glared at me as if I had sabotaged my own bottle of T-Cut and began taking the goods out of my basket. "You can't have that," she said.

"Or that. They're contaminated."

Clicking her teeth with exasperation,

she picked up three-quarters of my hard-won shopping and carried it off.

I waited, the queues got longer, and all that came back was a packet of crumpets. "Did you want the other things?" asked the woman at the checkout. "Oh, no, I was just giving them a ride in my trolley," I replied sweetly. "Some people..." I heard her say to the couple behind me, who could have been excused for wanting to murder me.

And so I got home too late to walk the dogs and without the two things I really did need, washing-up liquid and salt. From now on I will not be dragged into saving up my shopping until I have a list long enough to warrant confronting the misery that is Sainsbury's. I will pop in and get salt and washing-up liquid on my way home, from the Asians, from the Co-op, from Budgen's, from Tesco. From anywhere but bloody Sainsbury's. This morning, as the dogs and I beat along the frosty hedgerows, I found a snagged Sainsbury's bag bobbing in the wind.

In the old days, husbands read newspapers as a pack and wives paid them no attention at all – except now and then when the husband called for a refill and she poured him more coffee.

We know this from old *Punch* cartoons. All cartoons set at breakfast between 1920 and 1965 showed the same scene. The husband sat with his newspaper propped up on the table in front of him, so that he was hidden from his wife, and she got on with breakfast without him. Telephoning her butcher, perhaps, or maybe even her lover.

I remember one cartoon in which the husband, a beaky sort of bloke, is immersed in his breakfast newspaper that is folded such a way that the wife can see the headlines on the back. There, facing her, is a photograph of her husband with the headline "Missing Politician Found!" and the wife is saying something like: "How long were you away, dear?" – which says something about people's ideas about the marriage unit, not to mention about

marriage itself.

All that has changed now. *Punch* has died, breakfast is popularly supposed to be dying, marriage is going through a rough period and there are not as many newspapers as there used to be. We still have breakfast in our house, but we never get a chance to read my paper at breakfast. Our table is not quite big enough for all that and, as we are always slightly late for school, there is never time to read the paper, either.

What there is always time for is for my son to read the front of his cereal packet. He now sits every morning eating from his cereal bowl with his cereal packet in front of him, with me reading the back of it, hiding him as effectively from my view as the newspaper in the old days. I suppose I could make it a double barrier with my own cereal packet, but unfortunately I do not like any cereals (except Grape Nuts), so I do not have a packet to put up on my side of the table.

So anyway, yesterday I was reading the back of my son's packet of cereals, which I happened to notice were Rice Pops ...

(He does not call them Rice Pops. He calls them Rice Krispies. He once asked me to explain why Rice Krispies were sometimes called Rice Pops. "Well," I said, "Mr Sainsbury thinks it is a good idea to sell own-brand cereals that is, their version of best-selling cereals, but he can't call his version Rice Krispies, as otherwise the people who make Rice Krispies would be very angry, and he can't use the words 'Snap, Crackle and Pop' either, as that is all tied up in copyright."

minded drivers, can be difficult and dangerous. Here's how to play smart and be safe ...

I am sorry, Mr Sainsbury, but you print rubbish on the back of your Rice Pops packet. I

It is, in fact, harder to learn to ride a bike than to drive a car. For a start, a car has four wheels and cannot tip over. You cannot fall off a car. That is a great advantage.

Also, a car has an engine, and so the driver does not have to provide the motive power in the same way as a cyclist does – one less thing to think about. Nor does a motorist's shoelaces get chewed up in a car. Nor does a car go in the ditch if you momentarily take both hands off the steering wheel ...

Enough. Suffice it to say that I have ordered my son to give up cereals and go over to newspapers. There is a lot printed in newspapers that is wilfully wrong, but it is not nearly as bad as what you get on the back of Rice Pops.

Rupert Cornwell on why General Powell turned down the chance to run for the White House

Who'd want to be President?

When he started he seemed weary, half-dejected. But as the questions began, the Colin Powell of old emerged. His answers were honest, witty and elegant by turn, at times self-deprecating, but with never a shred of bitterness. In truth a class act, perhaps the classiest in contemporary American public life. Alas, it will not be available to voters.

Rarely in politics anywhere can a "No" have resonance so loudly. In the short term, General Powell's decision to forgo the presidential race of 1996 leaves Bob Dole a racing certainty for the Republican nomination. A poll taken immediately afterwards showed support for the Senate majority leader jumping from 45 to

He would have been subjected to an electoral ordeal unparalleled in nastiness

54 per cent among Republican voters, with none of his rivals beyond single figures. The other obvious winner is President Clinton himself, spared the prospect of facing the one potential challenger who beat him in every trial match-up.

Thus, barring intervention by the Rev Jesse Jackson, one of the most reviled presidents of recent times will have one of the easiest rides to renomination by his party. Whitewater, Paula Jones and Mr Clinton's famous inconstancy notwithstanding, he must now be odds-on favourite to retain the White House next year.

That very fact underscores the greater questions raised by the Powell withdrawal. Why do so many potentially excellent candidates refuse to run? And has the election system become so deformed that it now achieves the opposite of what it is supposed to do: pick the person best able to run the country?

The field of 1996 can be broken into not two, but three categories: the Democrats (consisting of Mr Clinton and, just possibly, the Rev Jackson), the 10 declared Republicans, and the no less long, but much weightier list of Republican notables who have opted out.

Of them, arguably the third is on paper the most impressive. The former Cabinet members



Yes please, said General Eisenhower (second from right); No thanks, said General Powell

Dick Cheney, Jack Kemp, Bill Bennett and James Baker, the former Vice-President, Dan Quayle; Governors with the star quality of William Weld of Massachusetts; and now General Powell – they have all been encouraged to run, pondered the matter and then issued a polite "No thanks".

The formal explanation is invariably "family reasons", and in General Powell's case that was demonstrably true on Wednesday. He may have looked tired, a touch dejected, as he began his announcement. Alma Powell, who had opposed a presidential run from the outset and who stood beside her husband on the podium, was positively beaming.

But disruption of family life is not the half of it. In 1976, George Washington, the first American soldier-turned-President, won office by acclamation. The last of them, Dwight Eisenhower, could spend what passed for the primary season of 1952 outside the country, and confine his campaigning to a statement from the Nato command in Europe that he

would take the Republican nomination if offered. No such luxury awaited the possible Eisenhower of 1996.

If General Powell had

decided to seek the US presi-

dency, he would have been sub-

jected to an electoral ordeal

unparalleled in the democra-

cies on this planet for duration,

cost, expenditure of energy,

and sheer nastiness. Even in the

abnormally brief 1992 cycle,

curtailed by the apparent invi-

bility of George Bush, the cam-

paign lasted 18 months.

This time, a really zealous

contender like Senator Phil

Graham of Texas has been run-

ning almost from the moment of Mr Clinton's inauguration on 20 January 1993. The travelling

is murderous, the speech-

making insane and the lack of

privacy an endless humiliation.

The quest for the presidency

requires not a decent plan to

balance the budget, but, in Gen-

eral Powell's words, a "passion

and commitment" that he could

not feel. In Bill Clinton's case,

passion and commitment meant

a skin thick enough to undergo

a prime-time national television

appearance in January 1992, imme-

diately after the football Superbowl, hand-in-hand with his wife, to explain away alleged

marital infidelities.

Even before he had entered

the race, warning shots were

crossing the general's bows.

Stories were afoot about his

wife's mild depressive condi-

tion. Equally absurd, and cer-

tainly more wounding, were the

attacks of conservative

Republican activists, one of

whom last week dismissed Gen-

eral Powell's 35 years in the mil-

itary, his two tours in Vietnam,

his role in the Gulf War, as

something out of Gilbert and

Sullivan, the work of a man who

had "become ruler of the

Queen's navy by polishing the

handles on the big brass front-

door". And all that before he

was a candidate.

At every turn there is

fundraising. The cost of a

decent primary campaign runs

at \$2m – and most, if not all,

of that must be raised before-

hand. With his exceptionally

high name-recognition, Gen-

eral Powell might have got away

with less, but for lesser mortals

the task is daunting. As Dan

Quayle noted when he took

himself out of consideration

last February (mainly because

of an unexpected inability to

raise money), between then and

the New Hampshire primary a

year later he would have had to

beg, borrow or otherwise

wheeze \$50,000 a day. "Do you

have to be out of your mind to

seek the presidency?" General

Powell was asked on Wednes-

day. No, was the answer, out of

obligatory deference to those

subjecting themselves to the

ordeal. But it helps.

INDEPENDENT • Friday 10 November 1995

BUSINESS NEWS DESK: tel 0171-293 2530 fax 0171-293 2098

Investment: BT running to stand still 23
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Market Report: Gas break-up hopes 24

CITY & BUSINESS EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

MARKET SUMMARY									
STOCK MARKETS									
FTSE 100					Dow Jones*				
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	12 Mth High	12 Mth Low	Yield (%)			
FTSE 100	3541.6	+4.5	+0.1	3593.0	3543.4	4.0			
FTSE 250	3808.3	-0.8	-0.0	3891.3	3300.9	3.5			
FTSE 350	1762.1	+1.6	+0.1	1785.3	1477.0	3.9			
FT Small Cap	1935.7	+1.4	+0.1	1993.1	1678.6	3.4			
FT All-Share	1739.5	+1.6	+0.1	1762.8	1465.2	3.9			
New York*	4982.6	+7.8	+0.2	4980.6	3674.6	2.5			
Tokyo	17821.0	-42.3	-0.2	17953.0	14485.4	-			
Hong Kong	9497.8	-84.6	-0.7	10032.9	6967.9	-			
Frankfurt	2192.8	+20.5	+0.9	2317.0	1911.0	-			
Paris	1852.6	-13.7	-0.7	2017.3	1721.1	-			
Milan	9172.0	-17.0	-1.9	10811.0	8912.0	-			
* Dow Jones graph at 1330 hours									
MAIN PRICE CHANGES									
FTSE 350 companies (excluding investment trusts)					Falls				
Rises	Price (p)	Change (p)	% Change		Price (p)	Change (p)	% Change		
London & Gtr	413	22	5.6		Ladbroke Group	132	22	14.3	
Burnet Group	110	5	4.8		Doring Kindersley	510	26	4.9	
Bt Assets Trust	69	3	4.5		Rank Organisation	408	19	4.4	
Willis Corroon	132	5	3.9		Smithkline Beecham	260	12	4.4	
Beazer Homes	163	6	3.8		Royal Insurance	374	15	3.9	
INTEREST RATES									
Short sterling*					UK medium gilt				
6.65					7.40				
6.60					7.30				
6.55					7.20				
6.50					7.10				
6.45					7.00				
6.40					6.90				
6.35					6.80				
6.30					6.70				
6.25					6.60				
6.20					6.50				
6.15					6.40				
6.10					6.30				
6.05					6.20				
6.00					6.10				
5.95					6.00				
5.90					5.90				
5.85					5.80				
5.80					5.70				
5.75					5.60				
5.70					5.50				
5.65					5.40				
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2.45					-1.00				
2.40					-1.10				
2.35					-1.20				
2.30					-1.30				
2.25					-1.40				
2.20					-1.50				
2.15									



COMMENT

The Government must be hoping – probably in vain – that the rest of the rail sale goes as smoothly as Hambros' handling of the Roscos'

Rolling stock sale clears line for privatisation

There is much wrong with rail privatisation but the sale of the rolling stock leasing companies (Roscos), announced yesterday, is certainly not part of the problem. This is an idea that Labour has toyed with and will probably be happy to leave untouched should it form the next government. Forget threats of a rethink being made yesterday by Opposition spokesmen.

The surprise for ministers in the rail sale is that a year ago they thought pension funds and insurance companies would show the most interest, and venture capitalists would be hard to convince. In the event, it has been the venture capitalists that have been falling over themselves to make offers and the rest of the City has yawned. The price achieved for the Roscos does not look at all bad.

In fact, these are hardly management buy-outs. The executives concerned will own one-fifth or less of the equity and the deals look much closer in spirit to a buy-in, where the financiers back managers they put in to run a company. In this case the managers were actually chosen by Hambros before the Roscos were put on the market, but the intention was much the same. The bidders were no doubt encouraged by the fact that so few of the managers came from BR.

The Roscos have been sold debt-free with no direct subsidies and so have been massaged into attractive animals to buy. But this is an industry that will continue to rely on subsidy so it is a matter of choice for the Government which parts bring in the money

and which don't. The Government has chosen to pay the subsidy to the train-operating companies, which then hand it over to the leasing companies to pay for rolling stock, and to Railtrack for track access charges. The structure is designed so the main proceeds of privatisation come through the Roscos and Railtrack. The Government must be hoping – probably in vain – that the rest of the rail sale goes as smoothly as Hambros' handling of the Roscos, which may well prove to be worth as much as Railtrack's rapidly shrinking price tag.

Whatever the merits of this rushed disposal of the railways ahead of the election, getting £1.8bn into Treasury coffers now is the watershed in the process. After the Roscos, there is little doubt that the rest of the railways will be sold.

After Gates, which way for DK?

What's the opposite of the "Max factor"? As Dan Wagner, chief executive of MAID, would readily testify, it is the "Gates factor" and it works like this. If Bill Gates of Microsoft does so much as glance in your company's direction, it sends your share price soaring as predictably as Robert Maxwell used to send share prices plunging. So what is going to happen to poor little Dorling

Kindersley as it parts company, on the best of terms, with the mighty Microsoft.

When Microsoft, the US software giant, paid £8m for 26 per cent of high-class publishing house nearly five years ago, there was arguably a good case for the link. Microsoft was developing its multimedia business, but it had no "content" to speak of – plenty of technology, but not much product. It also had pots of cash. Dorling, by contrast, had plenty of best-selling book titles and a growing reputation in the US children's and educational markets. Many of its best-sellers were natural candidates for the multimedia treatment: books such as *Musical Instruments* would work even better as interactive titles. But Dorling was relatively small and under-financed; building a multimedia business is hellishly expensive, and mistakes easy to make.

A marriage made in heaven, then. And indeed, the two managed to develop a few titles and to sign some licensing arrangements, some of which will continue even after Microsoft bails out later this month.

In the intervening years, Dorling took the brave but ultimately rewarding decision to develop its own multimedia products independently, ensuring that its hard-won reputation for quality would be maintained and that it would benefit directly from the fat margins CD-Roms continue to fetch.

Microsoft, for its part, charged ahead with its own multimedia ventures. So what had been strategic was beginning to look purely

financial, and Microsoft quite rightly decided to cash out (at more than seven times its initial investment).

Dorling has a bright future in an expanding business. There are more than 1 million CD-Rom players in UK homes, and the market is growing exponentially. Dorling may never have got as far as it did without the leg-up received from Microsoft. For its part, the US company has been paid in spades for the help provided. Divorce is never anything but painful and in this case there is bound to be a short-term impact on the share price. Dorling is now well enough established, however, to thrive without the "Gates factor".

Glaxo's long-term outlook looks good

A great deal of hope has been invested by Glaxo in the spanking new strategy it is developing to deal with the aftermath of its merger with Wellcome. What analysts actually got, however, seems to have left many distinctly underwhelmed. Appropriately enough, the venue for announcing the new approach was the company's ultra-modern £700m laboratory complex at Stevenage in Hertfordshire. Heralded as the first major statement on the group's drug pipeline since the £9bn takeover of Wellcome earlier in the year, the shares

have done well in the run-up to the event. Judging by yesterday's 15p fall to 85p, the news failed to live up to the splendour of the forum. The market had been hoping for some excitement on new drug prospects. In the event, Glaxo had little more to say about its new drugs than was already known, beyond a long list of prospects which may or may not make it to commercial development.

Today's meeting in New York could provide more fireworks. US analysts have proved enthusiastic about new drugs like the Epivir anti-Aids drug, which received approval from a key Food and Drug Administration committee this week. Even so, short-term prospects are plainly dull while the ferocious pace of change in this industry leaves the future as uncertain as ever.

If nothing else, however, analysts can be certain that with the Wellcome merger and the new research and development strategy outlined at Stevenage, Glaxo is better placed than most to cope with the revolution taking place in pharmaceuticals. The Wellcome merger will eventually yield £700m of annual cost cuts. The little-publicised acquisition of Affymax for \$533m (£337m) earlier this year, may also have given Glaxo a crucial competitive edge. This Californian computer simulation and robotics company increases hugely the group's capacity to test new compounds for medical applications and makes its aim of bringing three new drugs to market every year an entirely credible one.

Multimedia: Software giant set to make £50m profit out of near-five-year alliance with UK publisher

Microsoft to sever Dorling ties

MATTHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

Microsoft's near-five-year strategic alliance with Dorling Kindersley is to end, with the news yesterday that the US software giant is selling its entire 18 per cent stake in the UK book and CD-Rom publisher.

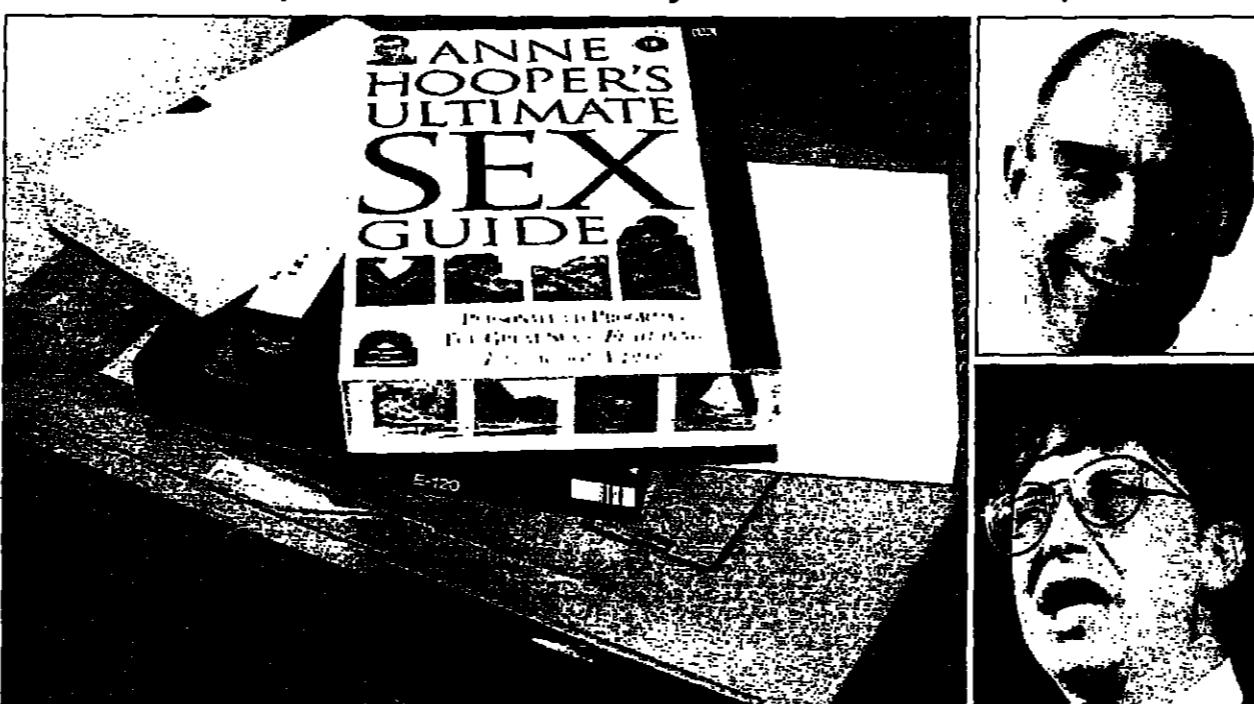
The shares, worth £60m, will be placed with institutions in the UK and on the Continent later this month. Co-operation between the two had waned in

recent years as both moved to develop their own electronic publishing titles.

The relationship at the outset was driven more by commercial than by investment considerations, Peter Kindersley, chairman and chief executive, said. "But with both companies now well established as electronic publishers in their own right, the commercial benefits are not dependent on a continued shareholding."

Gregory Maffei, Microsoft's treasurer who has represented the US company on the UK board, said: "Since Microsoft is primarily a developer of software rather than an investor, and since the value of its shareholding has appreciated considerably since 1991, it has decided to realise its investment."

Microsoft, which paid £8m for a 26 per cent stake prior to the flotation of DK in 1992, will realise a capital gain of about £50m. Shares have risen sharply recently, spurred by growing profits and by periodic rumours that a buyer – Microsoft perhaps



CD rom: One of four new titles developed by the multimedia company, chaired by Peter Kindersley (top right), which has ended its link with the US's Microsoft, headed by Bill Gates (bottom right)

Main photograph: Tony Buckingham

– might make a full bid. The speculation was fuelled by Bill Gates, Microsoft founder and sole executive, earlier this year, when he confirmed a willingness to invest in Turner Entertainment, the US film and TV giant since sold to Time Warner. Many in the industry expected further deals and viewed DK as a logical target.

Initially, the link with Microsoft led to jointly developed titles such as *Musical Instruments* and a licensing arrangement, which will remain in

place. DK also intends to develop products for Microsoft Network, including so-called "hybrids" that combine on-line services with CD-Rom formats.

Over the past two years, DK, originally a publisher of lavishly illustrated books, has diversified independently into the CD-Rom market, concentrating on children's and educational titles, including the best-selling *The Way Things Work*. Four new titles are being shipped to retail outlets, including Anne Hooper's *Ultimate Sex Guide*.

Analysts said yesterday that Microsoft's departure would not affect the company's performance. "Initially, the Microsoft link provided the technical back-up," Neil Black-

ley, media analyst at Goldman Sachs, said. "But DK decided it wanted to be the Rolls-Royce of multimedia, and wants to use its reputation for quality and earn the higher margins of the new media. It was a high-risk strategy, but it has paid off."

Analysts also shrugged off the dip in DK's share price yesterday, noting that large share sales would tend to produce downward pressure. After trading as low as 476p, down 60p, the shares recovered to close at 510p, 26p down on the day.

think there will be a budget agreement before long. But it will not happen in time for next Wednesday's meeting of the Fed's policy committee.

Professor Feldstein said there could be an agreement before the Fed meeting on 19 December. However, he predicted that the next reduction in US interest rates would be the last.

Increasing inflationary pressures would lead the Fed to start increasing rates after next November's presidential election.

Many Wall Street analysts disagree, greeting yesterday's figures as evidence of the absence of any inflationary threat.

John Williams, chief economist at Bankers Trust, said: "There is no evidence of any current inflation and none in the pipeline."

Share prices surged again yesterday with the Dow Jones industrial index 20 points higher at 4,873 by late morning, after setting a record on Wednesday. However, concern about the danger of a temporary default on US Treasury bonds took the bond market lower yesterday and led to a tumble in future prices.

The Clinton administration and the Republican-dominated Congress are locked in a bitter battle over plans for budget cuts, with Congress obstructing an increase in the government's debt ceiling. Most observers still

think Northumbrian would be the first of the 10 big water and sewage companies to fall prey to a takeover bid. Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, has imposed reductions in water bills of 15 per cent over six years as a condition of a bid by Lyonnaise, which already owns neighbouring North East Water and would merge the two companies. City analysts believe Lyonnaise could win Northumbrian at between £11 and £12. Shares in the water company yesterday fell by 3p to £10.91.

Speculation also continued over the future of South Wales Electricity following the announcement on Wednesday by Welsh Water that it was considering a bid for the electricity firm. Welsh Water first swooped five years ago, at one point holding a 15 per cent stake, but was consistently rebuffed in its advances.

Diplomat tried to stage rescue

A high-ranking Israeli diplomat told the Old Bailey yesterday how he tried to arrange a £400m rescue bid for the Maxwell group because he felt indebted to Robert Maxwell.

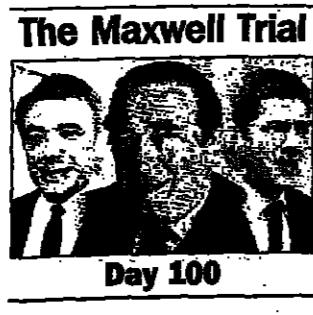
But David Kimche said neither of the Maxwell brothers, Kevin and Ian, told him about the huge pension fund liabilities. Dr Kimche, the retired director general of the Israeli foreign ministry and a roving ambassador at large, said he knew that after Maxwell's sudden death at sea, the shares in his group plunged and that his sons urgently needed cash to prop up the ailing empire.

He met them in London to try to see if they could find someone willing to invest in the group.

"I didn't do it for a fee or for a cut. I was doing it as a favour," he said. He felt indebted to Maxwell because of the help he had given him through his Russian contacts in enabling Russian Jews to leave for Israel.

Dr Kimche said he immediately thought of his friend, Roger Tamraz, as a possible investor because he knew he was very wealthy, a brilliant businessman and had extensive contacts with the Arab Gulf states.

In the days after Maxwell's death he approached Mr Tamraz about investing £400m in the



group. Dr Kimche understood he would lead a syndicate of wealthy Arabs to raise the money. Cross-examined by Richard Lissack QC, for the prosecution, Dr Kimche said he believed the reason that the rescue bid failed was because time ran out.

Mr Tamraz told the court he believed the injection of £400m would have saved the Maxwell empire.

He agreed when cross-examined by Mr Lissack that an arrest warrant had been issued for him by a Lebanese court accusing him of a \$200m fraud, that he had been jailed for two years in his absence in Jordan and had been ordered by a Paris court to pay \$56m to a French bank.

Kevin, Ian, and Larry Trachtenberg, a former Maxwell adviser, deny conspiracy to defraud the pension fund.

The trial continues today.

Lyonnaise seeks agreed bid for Northumbrian

MARY FAGAN
Industrial Correspondent

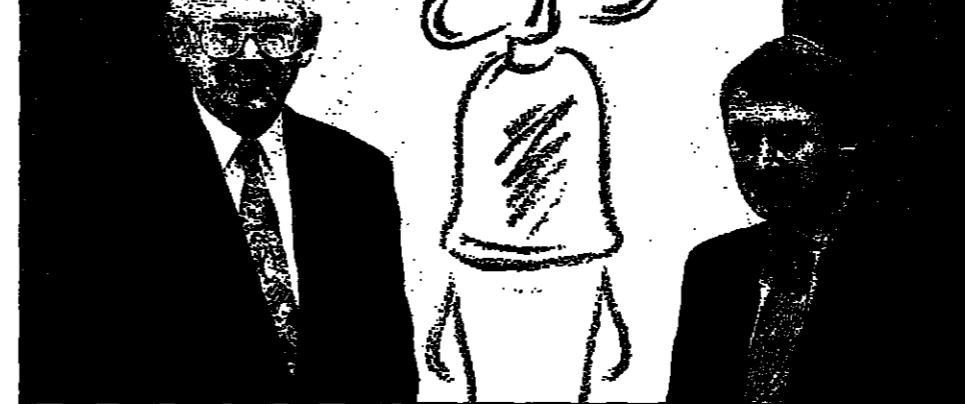
Lyonnaise des Eaux of France hopes to hammer out proposals for an agreed takeover of Northumbrian Water at a meeting scheduled for next Tuesday. The discussion between the two companies follows months of uncertainty over Lyonnaise's intentions, culminating earlier this week in the Government clearing a potential deal with the industry regulator, Ian Bryant, over the detail. But the likely outcome could include a customer rebate next year and a package for shareholders, possibly including preference shares.

Speaking as Northumbrian announced a 33 per cent increase in interim pre-tax profits to £61.4m, Mr Cranston said the board was seeking to share out the benefits of efficiency gains over and above those required by the regulatory regime. He said these arrangements, which would be of considerable benefit to both

shareholders and customers, would not be announced until after clarification of the "unwelcome and uncertain situation created by Lyonnaise des Eaux".

Northumbrian's earnings per share in the six months to 30 September increased to 70.3p from 59.1p a year ago.

The interim dividend increased by 17 per cent to 11.1p.



Ready for battle: Northumbrian Water's chief executive David Cranston (left) and finance director J Michael Taylor yesterday

The company said any future benefit-sharing plans could result in a "step reduction" in the dividend cover to not less than 2.5 times from around four times at present.

Northumbrian would be the first of the 10 big water and sewage companies to fall prey to a takeover bid. Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, has imposed reductions in water bills of 15 per cent over six years as a condition of a bid by Lyonnaise, which already owns neighbouring North East Water and would merge the two companies. City analysts believe Lyonnaise could win Northumbrian at between £11 and £12. Shares in the water company yesterday fell by 3p to £10.91.

Speculation also continued over the future of South Wales Electricity following the announcement on Wednesday by Welsh Water that it was considering a bid for the electricity firm. Welsh Water first swooped five years ago, at one point holding a 15 per cent stake, but was consistently rebuffed in its advances.

Truce looms in magazine battle

NIGEL COPE

Tesco's threat to shake up the newspaper and magazine distribution industry receded yesterday after distributors and wholesalers agreed to put their own house in order.

The prospect of peace increased after the two sides met at a specially convened meeting of the Association of Newspaper and Magazine Wholesalers in London. Those present included the big newspaper and magazine distributors such as WH Smith and John Menzies as well as supermarket groups Tesco, Safeway and ASDA, which are keen to sell more magazines through their stores.

Tesco had threatened to launch its own distribution service if the existing system was not made more flexible. Tesco's chairman, Sir Ian MacLaurin,

launched a fierce attack on the industry last month, claiming it was uncompetitive and outdated. He complained that supermarkets were unable to obtain sufficient supplies of big-selling magazines while smaller newsagents were often sent more copies than they needed.

The wholesalers have agreed to improve the service they offer and make it more appropriate for the needs of high-volume customers such as the supermarkets.

Central to the discussions were proposals to cut costs and ease the burden of administration on the supermarkets. These include quicker supply of newspapers and magazines, the standardisation of documents to make administration more efficient and a limit to increases in carriage and service charges to an agreed formula. This

refers to the cost of delivering newspapers and collecting unsold copies.

Although the proposals are only seen as a first step towards a formal agreement, Tesco said it was satisfied with the outcome of the talks. "We welcome any moves that make the system more flexible. These are encouraging signs and we are pleased that a debate is now going on," the company said.

Christopher Supplies, director of the Association of Newspaper and Magazine Wholesalers, said: "Ultimately, our aim is to ensure the public gets the titles they want when and where they want them. This is not something that wholesalers can guarantee by themselves. It is up to the industry as a whole. We are now looking to retailers to help us build on the very important progress we have made today."

Germany 'will miss EMU date'

PAUL WALLACE

Economics Editor

Further doubt was cast on the feasibility of achieving European Monetary Union in 1997, when the chief economist of the Deutsche Bundesbank said Germany might itself not meet the criteria for eligibility to take part in EMU in 1997.

Omar Issing, who is a leading figure on the Bundesbank Council, said that Germany itself faced problems given the big financial transfers still passing from western to eastern Germany.

According to David Marsh, director of European Strategy at investment bank, Robert Fleming, the statement by Dr Issing was potentially significant because it gave a further reason why the 1997 date might be postponed. "He is reverting to

his original somewhat pessimistic forecast that Germany won't meet the debt/GDP or the budget deficit ratios by 1997," said Mr Marsh.

At a press conference in London, Dr Issing said that the excessive budget deficit procedures in the Maastricht Treaty once monetary union had occurred were not enough. "They are too weak, we need sanctions that are triggered automatically." He also said that the Maastricht Treaty implied that "in normal times the deficit will be lower than 3 per cent."

He also struck a distinctly sceptical note about the "discrepancy" between the move to a single currency and a supranational bank on the one hand and the "very preliminary elements" towards political union on the other hand.

In a speech to a conference

organised by the Institute of Economic Affairs, Dr Issing poured cold water on the idea that the move to EMU would promote further political integration.

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sport

Jockeys' right move goes wrong

Racing

JOHN COBB

Nothing causes more confusion on racecourses than the signalling to jockeys of a need to avoid a jump when there is an obstacle on the landing side. Yesterday, six jockeys, including the season's leading rider, Tony McCoy, and Mick Fitzgerald received seven-day suspensions from the stewards for failing to follow the instructions for such an eventualty resulted in the customary chaos.

The race that will cost McCoy and Fitzgerald rides in some im-

portant events was a modest selling hurdle, the least valuable race on any of yesterday's three cards.

The final flight was doled off so that medics could care for the temporarily stricken jockey Michael Clarke, the rider of Assemble Dancer who fell in the first circuit of the track.

Ground staff waded the field to the left of the flight, but six riders, including McCoy on the first past the post, Little Hooligan, ignored the gestures and steered to the right of the hurdle. Jamie Osborne, showing the sort of confidence one should expect from such an experienced rider, elected to run to the

left of the hurdle on the fifth home. Safe Secret. Three other runners, who were out of contention, followed him.

At the inevitable inquiry, the stewards found that the six riders who had steered to the

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Persian Lady (Ayr 3.45)
NB: Persian Tactics (Huntingdon 1.45)

right of the hurdle had taken the wrong course and banned them for seven days (18-25 Nov). The race was awarded to Safe

Secret, while Faiez, Coochie and Lorcanjo, originally the last three home, were promoted to second, third and fourth.

Explaining the lengthy suspensions, the stewards' secretary, William Nunneley, said: "The stewards took a very strong view about this case as there are clear instructions about staying to the left of a hurdle in these circumstances posted in the weighing room."

"They decided to give them seven days as they were very nearly mowed down ambulance men and ground staff. The stewards felt they were all equally culpable and took it very seriously."

"It's ridiculous," McCoy said. "The flags were just waving and the flags and they didn't know which way they were pointing

them. I'll talk to my agent, Dave Roberts, to see if I appeal against the severity of the ban."

Fitzgerald would say only: "If I said what I thought you would be able to print it."

But Osborne was all smiles, saying: "I had no doubts I was right, it plainly says in the weighing room that you have got to go to the left when a hurdle is doled off. There was another incident at the beginning of the season and we all went left on that occasion."

Roy Brotherton, the trainer of Safe Secret, said: "When I saw the filly disappear I was derailed where the hell Jamie



Pipe tips step out of line

Martin Pipe's "Pipeline" premium-rate tipping line has fallen foul of the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services. Pipe must pay the cost of an ICSTIS inquiry into a failure to give address and pricing information.

Pipe's wife Carole said: "We put an advert on the results page saying 'another winner for the Pipeline' but we omitted to put on the call charges – it was an oversight on our part." Ladbrokes profits fall, page 20

CHELTENHAM

HYPERION
3.05 Unguided Missile
3.40 Myself
4.10 Ginger Jim

GOING: Good to Firm.

LAT: In-field course with stiff fence. Uphill section of 240yd.

There is a N of town off A435. Bus link from Cheltenham station (served by Bristol, Birmingham and London Paddington) which is 2m away. ADMISSION: Club £15 (holders, 16-24 years, £8); 'Tickettellers' £12; Poster Enclosure £5. CAR PARK: Free.

SIS

LEADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS: Twissie-Davis — 28 winners from 187 runners given a success ratio of 15.7% and a profit to 51 level stake of £4,235; K. Moore — 26 winners from 187 runners given a success ratio of 13.8% and a profit to 51 level stake of £4,235; G. Salter — 15 winners from 113 runners, 14.2%, +£19,04.

LEADING JOCKEYS: R. Dunaway — 41 winners, 210 rides, 15.9%, +£3,324; N. Whilham — 21 winners, 87 rides, 14.5%; M. S. Edwards — 21 winners, 87 rides, 24.1%, +£33,153; Osborne — 21 winners, 146 rides, 14.4%, +£46,70.

WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: None.

LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: April's Model Lady (2.56) has been sent 367 miles by R Bailey from Upper Lombers, Berk.

BETTING: 5-1 HR The Casper, 5-2 Northumbrian King, 5-4 Easyjet, 5-1 Good Tuesday, 5-2 Mr. Better Times Abroad, 7-4 Trump, 8-1 others

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Manager to quit in French row

Rugby union

STEVE BALE
reports from Toulouse

André Herrero has been France's team manager for all of two months and has already had enough of the venomous infighting at the top of French rugby. Last night he announced he would resign after tomorrow's first Test against New Zealand here at the Parc Toulousain.

Relations between the French federation and its international players are so strained, specifically over the effective suspension of three senior internationals who began this season in South Africa, that the squad of 21 for this Test last night boycotted a civic reception at the imposing Capitole building in the city centre in protest.

Whereupon Herrero decided to quit as a protest against both the players, whom he described as "egotistical and unrepresentative of French rugby", and the federation for its mismanagement. "I cannot go on," he lamented.

It is a sorry departure for one of the most deeply respected figures in the game here, an illustrious forward capped 22 times in the Sixties and a lifetime servant of the Toulon club as player, captain, coach and president.

Yesterday's events, climactic and farcical, were set in train as long ago as June when Laurent Cabannes, Thierry Lacroix and Olivier Roumat stayed on in South Africa after the World Cup. In direct defiance of Bernard Lapasset, the federation president, they did not come home until after the Cur-

rie Cup final – in which all three played – on 14 October.

Lapasset then imposed a month's "rest", thereby excluding Cabannes, Lacroix and Roumat from consideration for tomorrow's match. Three weeks ago the players thought they had persuaded Lapasset to change his mind, only to be disabused last week when the president finally refused to back down.

Then, the national squad of 33 made a final plea by writing to Lapasset from a training camp in Bordeaux last weekend. The president's implacable response provoked a unanimous vote after training yesterday to boycott last night's function. Perfect preparation for a Test match? Mais non.

NEW ZEALAND v France, Toulouse, tomorrow: J Wilson (Capt); E Bush, E Burns, W Little (all North Harbour), J Lema (Courtaul); S Cordero (Capt), S Groom, R Horne, C O'Brien, S Fitzpatrick (Capt), G Brown, R Horne (all Auckland), I Jones, B Larsen (both North Harbour), Z Brooke, M Jones (both Northland).

■ Paul Burnell, the London Scottish prop, has been confirmed as replacement for the suspended Peter Wright in Scotland's side to face Western Samoa on 18 November. Wright picked up a six-week ban following his sending-off for verbally abusing the international referee Ken McCartney during Boroughmuir's match at Galashiels last month. That has given Burnell the chance to win his 40th full cap. Stuart Paul of Heriot's FP takes Burnell's place in the Scotland A team for Sunday's match at Hawick against the Samoans, who will field the full-back Veli Pau, described as being "lucky to stay on" by the Edinburgh coach Ian Barnes after a dangerous tackle on the winger Duncan Macrae in the tourists' opening game.

Halpin stands down

DAVID LLEWELLYN

Garry Halpin has withdrawn from Ireland's squad for the rest of the season. His decision comes after a troubled weekend when the Ireland coach, Murray Kidd, called his squad together, forcing England-based players to miss Courage League matches.

Halpin dutifully attended last weekend's get-together while his club, London Irish, were beating Newcastle, but according to reports, Halpin and his international colleague Conor O'Shea, the full-back, could miss six out of the next 10 league matches through international calls.

Halpin, a 29-year-old maths teacher who is giving up a potential £25,000 which he would have earned had he played in his country's full programme of matches this season, said: "I've been thinking about this since the

World Cup and I want to spend more time with my family."

I've thought seriously about the IRFU contract but mine will be a short-term loss. If London Irish go into the First Division, there will be money available, and if they don't, then I can transfer quite easily under the new seven-day rule."

■ The British Lions prawn on.

The last symbol of the old amateur days, when the best of British used to wander their vast Empire, is to be revived for a tour of South Africa in 1997 at the invitation of the Springboks.

■ Tian Strauss, the former Springbok captain and No 8, has signed a two-year contract with Rupert Murdoch's professional Super League to play rugby in Australia. Seven other South African players – Christian Stewart, Andrew Aitken, Heinrich Fuls, Warren Brooski, Andy Marinos, Pieter Muller and Kevin Schraeder – have also gone over to league.

SPORTING DIGEST

Baseball

Marty Cordova, the Minnesota Twins outfielder, won the 1995 American League Rookie of the Year Award on Wednesday, narrowly beating Garner Anderson, the California Angels outfielder.

Basketball

INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY (Netherlands): Euro-95: Tokyo 100; Sacramento 109; Boston 123; Phoenix 102; Denver 107; Portland 100; New Jersey 102; Orlando 100; Dallas 96; San Antonio 111; Vancouver 122; Denver 117; Seattle 122; Utah 108; LA Lakers 98; LA Clippers 92; Atlanta 90.

Boxing

PROFESSIONAL PROMOTION (York Hall, Bethnal Green, Wednesday): 10-11 mid-lightweights: P. Rooney (Coy) vs G. Evans (Benn); 12-13 mid-lightweights: J. Murphy (Coy) vs G. Evans; 14-15 mid-lightweights: P. Rooney (Coy) vs J. D. Fulton (D. Fenton); 16-17 mid-lightweights: P. Murphy (Coy) vs J. D. Fulton (D. Fenton); 18-19 mid-lightweights: P. Rooney (Coy) vs J. D. Fulton (D. Fenton); 20-21 lightweights: P. Rooney (Coy) vs J. D. Fulton (D. Fenton); 22-23 featherweights: P. Rooney (Coy) vs J. D. Fulton (D. Fenton); 24-25 bantamweights: P. Rooney (Coy) vs J. D. Fulton (D. Fenton); 26-27 super-bantamweights: P. Rooney (Coy) vs J. D. Fulton (D. Fenton); 28-29 flyweights: P. Rooney (Coy) vs J. D. Fulton (D. Fenton); 30-31 middleweights: P. Rooney (Coy) vs J. D. Fulton (D. Fenton); 32-33 light heavies: P. Rooney (Coy) vs J. D. Fulton (D. Fenton); 34-35 heavyweights: P. Rooney (Coy) vs J. D. Fulton (D. Fenton); 36-37 super-heavies: P. Rooney (Coy) vs J. D. Fulton (D. 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